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SELECTED STORIES FROM CANADIAN PROSE

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SELECTED STORIES FROM CANADIAN PROSE

TORONTO: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF
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1929

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By
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INTRODUCTION

THE selection of stories from Canadian prose, each a complete narrative in itself, has necessarily placed a limitation upon the choice of authors and books represented in the present volume. Yet this selection has some grounds for a claim to represent Canadian prose. The stories are without exception outstanding, first, in excellence of diction, style, and construction; second, in particular interest for boys and girls. The former quality would win for many of them a place in any representative selection; the latter has been the final test in this.

It may be suggested that historical fiction has been accorded an undue prominence. It is to the credit of Canadian authorship that so much of our prose is in this field. Where fiction provides accurate pictures of the life of the people, particularly in its more exciting moments, there is splendid material for such a volume. To these two types have been added two distinct examples of the Canadian nature story, two worthy studies of Canadian psychology, two selections from our first and possibly greatest humorist, an

incident giving us a glimpse of the most celebrated heroine in Canadian prose, and a short selection from perhaps the most famous of our modern novelists.

These are such stories as might have been selected "by request", as it were, from the complete repertoire of Canadiana. In so far as it has been possible to apply the test of special interest for boys and girls the editors are content to "rest their case" with them. This is their book of Canadian prose tales.

Thomas Chandler Haliburton was born, a son of a Chief Justice, in 1796 in Windsor, N.S. After graduation from the University of King's College, Halifax, he entered his father's profession, practising law in Annapolis Royal. In *The First Settlers,* a selection from *The Old Judge, or Life in a Colony,* we have an excellent picture of pioneer life in his province. *Mr. Slick Comments on His Theory of "Soft Sawder" and "Human Natur' "* and *Mr. Slick Comments on His Father's Shrewdness in Bargaining* are from *The Clockmaker; or, The Sayings and Doings of Sam Slick of Slickville,* First Series, which appeared first in Halifax in 1836. An English traveller meets, near Colchester, N.S., a clock peddler, "a tall thin man, with hollow cheeks and bright twinkling black eyes, on a bay horse somewhat out of condition." They set off

together, their conversations and adventures providing Haliburton with the means of making humorous observations on the foibles of his time.

Emily Pauline Johnson was born at "Chiefswood" near Brantford in 1862, the daughter of the Chief of the Six Nations Indians. Her education, so far as attendance at school was concerned, was limited to a few years at the Indian School on the reserve and two years at Public School. From her mother, formerly Emily Howells, of Bristol, England, she received the greater part of her education. *Little Wolf-Willow* from *The Shagganappi* is worthy of a place in this collection of prose because in it the spirit of a race is revealed as only so devoted a daughter could reveal it. Almost unconsciously, it would seem Pauline Johnson has paid a fitting tribute to the Royal North-West Mounted Police. It is said Pauline Johnson adopted her Indian name of Tekahionwake in later life because of her intense antipathy (like Little Wolf-Willow) to the practice of giving Indian children white names as a part of their education.

Soon after 1763 Pontiac, the great Chief, formed an alliance of tribes to attempt the capture of the British forts established along the western frontier. In all there were nine to be taken. By a cunning stratagem seven of them were caught unprotected and with little effort captured. There remained the

Detroit and Michilimackinac. Pontiac conceived the brilliant plan of laying siege to both at the same time, and by as accurate timing as was possible with the means at his disposal arranged the simultaneous display described in the selection. At Michilimackinac the plan succeeded, with frightful loss to the defenders. Not long after the events described a Colonel Askin as he was called—his real name was Erskine—the grandfather of Major John Richardson, volunteered to command a relief expedition to Detroit to raise the siege. His expedition was successful; he married shortly after one of the young women who had been in Detroit under the siege. Their daughter was John Richardson's mother. From his grandfather, Richardson got his source material for *Wacousta,* the novel from which *The Conspiracy of Pontiac* has been taken. When in his sixteenth year Richardson enlisted in Brock's army, and in the war of 1812 fought side by side with Tecumseh's Indians. There is no doubt that he learned a great deal about Indian character and cunning which was to be immeasurably useful to him later. *Wacousta* was first published in London in 1832.

The Feather is the story of an interesting challenge race between the champion runners of two tribes, the Algonkins and the Hochelagans. This race was held for many years on the island of Tiotiaké (now part of Montreal). The selection is from *The Master*

of Life by W. D. Lightall, first published in 1910. In it the author gives a beautiful poetic interpretation of Indian psychology. It is perhaps the finest example in Canadian prose of descriptive writing about Indians at play.

No collection of Canadian stories would be complete without one from the pen of Agnes C. Laut, a distinguished graduate of the University of Manitoba. *Radisson's First Voyage* is characteristic. Nowhere else is to be found the enthusiasm, the zeal for historical accuracy, blended with the love of a good story. It remained for Agnes Laut perhaps more than any other student of Canadian history to write the romance of Western Canada in such a form as "he who runs may read".

The two selections, *The Winning of Marie-Louise* and *Expiation* are from a book of short stories by Duncan Campbell Scott. The author, more famous perhaps as a poet, belongs to the group of poets born in the 1860's, of which C. G. D. Roberts was a prominent member. Two volumes of short stories have been published by Dr. Scott. There is little doubt that the second, *The Witching of Elspie,* published in 1923 and from which the two selections have been chosen, is the finer. It is indeed refreshing to find among writers of Canadian fiction one who, being a poet, adheres to his life rule of writing and rewriting, polishing and re-

polishing, until before the story has left his hand it is as nearly perfect as he can make it. *Expiation* reveals his power in the psychological short story.

Sir Gilbert Parker was born in Ontario in 1862, but after a few years went to Australia and then to London, where practically all his writing was done. It is interesting to note that *The Patrol of the Cypress Hills* was the first of a long list of stories from his pen. It is said that on coming to London from Australia he submitted to a friend, a noted war correspondent, a collection of stories. His friend's comment was: "You have the best collection of titles I ever saw." Parker promptly burnt the manuscript. A few days later, he saw the leather coat and fur cap of a trapper in a shop window. The urge to write came on him again, and he began immediately *The Patrol of the Cypress Hills.* This story was published in *Pierre and His People* in 1890. It is one of our finest stories of the heroism and nobility of the Royal North West Mounted Police.

C. G. D. Roberts was born in New Brunswick in 1860. After graduation from the University of New Brunswick he spent some years in teaching, first at Chatham, N.B., where his first volume of poems was completed, and later in Fredericton, where he taught for one year. At the age of twenty-three he forsook teaching to become the first editor of Goldwin Smith's paper *The Week.*

After a few months he resigned. In 1885 he was appointed Professor of English and French at King's College, Windsor, N.S., and between this year and 1895 he completed *A History of Canada.* Since 1887 there has come a steady stream of volumes from his pen which rivals comparison with the most prolific writers of prose and poetry. In 1896 *Earth's Enigmas,* his first book of animal stories appeared. It was followed by *The Heart of the Ancient Wood, The Kindred of the Wild, Watchers of the Trails, Red Fox,* and many others, of which *Hoof and Claw* from which *Forest Strategy* is selected was published in 1913. Dr. Roberts does not write of animals as creatures without some power akin to reason. His chief concern is to reveal their ability to arrive at decisions after careful survey of the situation. His stories are studies in animal psychology.

Bargaining With the Factor is from Arthur Heming's *The Drama of the Forests* published in 1921. The author gives an excellent description of the conduct of business in a trading post in the days of the fur trade.

The three incidents from *The Living Forest* published in 1925 which follow are representative of the author's type of animal story. Like Haliburton, Heming makes use of the device of a journey to piece together a series of more or less complete narratives. The situation—seven hundred miles northwest of Winnipeg; the characters, two inex-

perienced boys and a fine woodsman, unarmed and without supplies or canoe; provide him with the opportunity of opening for us (as for the two boys) a veritable treasure chest about animals. Unlike C. G. D. Roberts he is not so much interested in the reasoning of the animals as in its outward manifestation—their behaviour.

A Journey to the Woods is probably a very accurate account of the author's trip in 183— from Cobourg, Ontario, to a farm north of Peterborough. Mrs. Susanna Moodie was born at Bungay, Suffolk, England, in 1803. She came to Canada in 1832 as the bride of Lieutenant Moodie of the 21st Fusiliers. They settled first in Cobourg. Their trip to the new farm farther from "the front" is described with peculiar clarity. In *Roughing it in the Bush* from which this extract has been taken Mrs. Moodie gives such a picture of pioneer life in Upper Canada as only a woman could.

Edward William Thomson was born in Toronto in 1849. When he was sixteen he ran away from home to join the Northern Army, only to serve until the close of the American Civil War. He returned to Canada, and after spending a few years in civil engineering he accepted a journalistic position in 1878. In 1891 he became associate editor of *The Youth's Companion,* a position which he held for ten years. He has written in all four or five volumes of short stories, of

which the best known is *Old Man Savarin and Other Stories,* first published in 1895. *Dour Davie's Drive* from this volume is a careful study of the amazing endurance of a Scotch teamster.

Louis Hémon, the author of *Maria Chapdelaine* from which *The French Canadian Makes Land* has been taken, was born in Brest, France, in 1880. He came to Canada in 1912, possibly to get material for stories for French magazines. While in the Lake St. John district he met Samuel Bidard, with whom he secured a job as a farm hand. He worked with Bidard for eight months, helping to clear the land. His one stipulation apart from wages, which were almost negligible, was that he be free on Saturday afternoons. On any one of them he might be found seated on the banks of the Peribonka river blocking out his *Maria Chapdelaine.* After he left Bidard he spent three weeks in St. Gideon, in which time he almost completed the final writing of this exquisite masterpiece. There is no doubt that Samuel Bidard and his wife served as models for "Samuel Chapdelaine" and "Madame Chapdelaine". His characters are types, nevertheless, but they are so skilfully drawn as to be real enough to be true living creatures of flesh and blood. Louis Hémon died in Canada in 1913. The translator, William Hume Blake, K.C., was born in Toronto in 1881. He died in Victoria, B.C., in 1924.

Work is a short story from *Chez Nous* by Adjutor Rivard, at present a member of the staff of Laval University. Rivard is the author of seven volumes in all, of which *Chez Nous* is the first to be published in English. There is a quaint simplicity in Rivard's writing, and an almost inspired ability in the sketching of character—the results of a deep affection for the people of rural Quebec. Again English-speaking Canada owes a great debt to the excellent translation made by W. H. Blake.

The Fruits of Toil is a short story from *The Way of the Sea,* by Norman Duncan, first published in 1904. The author was born in Brantford, Ontario, in 1871. He spent but three summers in Newfoundland and one in Labrador, yet they were sufficient to give him material for several excellent volumes. There is no doubt that in his very sudden death at the age of forty-five Canada lost one of her most gifted authors. Frank Bullen has said of him: "I am absolutely certain that with the exception of Joseph Conrad and Rudyard Kipling no writing about the sea has ever probed so deeply and so faithfully into its mysteries as his."

L. M. Montgomery, author of the Anne books, was born at Clifton, P.E.I. In the spring of 1904 she was asked to do a serial story for a boys' and girls' paper. Looking through a notebook she came upon the following entry: "Elderly couple apply to

orphan asylum for boy; a girl was sent to them." Presently Anne flashed into her imagination and became so real that to put her into a novel was almost imperative. Incidentally, the serial was abandoned, and when *Anne of Green Gables* was finished no publisher could be found for it. After five failures the sixth publisher finally took it up. Over one million copies of Mrs. Montgomery's books have been sold since *Anne of Green Gables* first appeared in 1908. Mark Twain has said of Anne: "She is the dearest and most moving and delightful child since the immortal Alice."

The Death of the Colt is from *Jalna,* a novel by Mazo de la Roche. The author began her literary career at eighteen, contributing stories to Canadian and American magazines. This very short excerpt, cameo-like in its beauty of line and simplicity of detail, is from her fourth novel.

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SELECTED STORIES FROM CANADIAN PROSE

THE FIRST SETTLERS

THE people who discovered and colonized this country were so different from those who come to us in the present day, that it may amuse you to hear the result of my investigations.

During one of my visits to Paris I had accidently met with the Journal of Mark Lescarbot, a French lawyer who had accompanied the exploring party that first visited this part of America. With this book in my hand (which was published as early as 1609) I traced their movements from place to place in their attempt at colonization. On the 8th of November, 1603, Henry IV of France granted to Sieur de Monts, a gentleman of his bedchamber, a patent constituting him Lieutenant-General of L'Acadi (now Nova Scotia) with power to conquer and Christianize the inhabitants. On the 7th of March, having equipped two vessels, he set sail from Havre de Grace, accompanied by the celebrated Champlain and Monsieur Poutrincourt, and arrived on the 7th of May at a harbour (Liverpool) on the south east shore of the province. From thence they continued coasting the country, until they arrived at the Bay of Fundy. On the eastern side of this bay they discovered a narrow

strait, into which they entered, and soon found themselves in a spacious basin, environed with hills, from which descended streams of fresh water. Between these high lands ran a large, navigable river, to which they gave the name of L'Equille. It was bordered by fertile meadows and filled with delicate fish. Poutrincourt, charmed with the beauty of the place, gave it the name of Port Royal (now Annapolis). After exploring the neighbourhood and refreshing themselves, they ascended the River St. John, as far as Fredericton, and then, visiting the coast of Maine, spent the winter of 1604-5 at the Island of Saint Croix, the identity of which has lately been the subject of so much discussion between the Governments of Great Britain and the United States. The weather proved very severe, and the people suffered so much from the scurvy that thirty-six of them died. The remaining forty, who were all invalids, lingered on until the spring, when they recovered by means of the fresh vegetation.

After an ineffectual attempt to reach a more southern climate, they re-crossed the Bay of Port Royal, where they found a reinforcement from France of forty men, under the command of Dupont. They then proceeded to erect buildings on the spot where Annapolis now stands, with a view to a permanent occupation of the country. De Monts and Poutrincourt, having put their affairs in

as good order as possible, embarked in the autumn for France, leaving Pontgragé Commandant, with Champlain and Champdore as lieutenants, to perfect the settlement and explore the country. During the winter they were plentifully supplied by the savages with venison, and a great trade was carried on for furs. Nothing is said of the scurvy; but they had a short allowance of bread, not by reason of any scarcity of corn, but because they had no means of grinding it, except a hand mill, which required hard and continued labour. The savages were so averse to this exercise, that they preferred hunger to the task of grinding, though they were offered half of the flour in payment. De Monts and Poutrincourt were at that time in France, preparing, under every discouragement, for another voyage.

On the 13th of May, 1606, they sailed from Rochelle, accompanied by Lescarbot, who has left us a record of their proceedings; and on the 27th of July arrived at Port Royal. To their astonishment they found but two persons remaining. The rest conjecturing from the long absence of succour that the settlement had been abandoned by De Monts, compelled the officer in charge to sail for Canseau, in order that they might obtain a passage to France in some of the fishing vessels that frequented that port. Two men, however, having more courage and more faith than the others (La Taille and Mequelet) vol-

unteered to remain and guard the stores and the buildings. These faithful retainers were at their dinner, when a savage rushed in and informed them that a sail was in sight, which they soon discovered to be the long expected vessel of their chief. Poutrincourt now began his plantation; and having cleared a spot of ground sowed European corn, and several kinds of garden vegetables.

The manner in which they spent the third winter (1606-7) was social and festive. Poutrincourt established the order of "Le Bon Temps," of which the principal officers and gentlemen, fifteen in number, were members. Every one was *maitre d'hôtel* in his turn for one day, beginning with Champlain, who was first installed into the office. The president (whom the Indians called Atoctegi) having superintended the preparations, marched to the table, baton in hand, with the collar of the order round his neck, and napkin on his shoulder, and was followed by the others successively, each carrying a plate. The same form was observed at every meal; and at the conclusion of supper, as soon as grace was said, he delivered, with all gravity, his insignia of office to his successor, and pledged him in a cup of wine. The advantage of this institution was, that each one was emulous to be prepared for his day, by previously hunting or fishing, or purchasing fish or game of the natives, who constantly resided among them, and were extremely pleased with their

manners. The chiefs of the savages were alone allowed the honour of sitting at their table; the others partook of the hospitality of the kitchen. The abundance and variety of the fare this winter was a subject of no little boasting to Lescarbot, on his return to Europe, where he taunted the frequenters of *La Rue aux Ours de Paris* (where was one of the first eating houses of the day) that they knew nothing of the pleasures of the table who had not partaken of the beavers' tails, and the mouffles of moose of Port Royal. The weather, meanwhile, was particularly mild and agreeable.

On the 14th of January, on a Sunday, they proceeded by water two leagues, to a cornfield, where they dined cheerfully in the sunshine, and enjoyed the music of their fatherland. You will observe, therefore, my dear sir, that from the earliest account that we have of this climate, it has always had the same character of variableness and uncertainty. The winter but one preceding this (when they were at St. Croix) was extremely severe; and we are informed that that which succeeded it was remarkable for the most intense cold the Indians ever recollected. Their time, however, was not devoted to amusement alone. They erected more buildings, for the accommodation of other adventurers, in making pitch for the repairs of their vessels and, above all, in putting up a water mill, to grind their corn. In this latter attempt they com-

pletely succeeded, to their own infinite relief and the great amusement of the savages. Some of the iron work of this first North American mill is yet in existence, and another of the same kind (Easson's mill) still occupies the ancient site.

You will, perhaps, smile at the idea of antiquities in a country which is universally called a new world; but America has a great advantage over Europe in this respect, that it has a record of its birth, while the origin of the other has to be sought for in the region of fable. I am a native of this country and this little settlement has always had great attractions for me, who am an old Tory, from its primogeniture being two years older than Jamestown in Virginia, and three years senior to Quebec, which was settled twelve years before the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in Massachusetts.

MR. SLICK COMMENTS ON HIS THEORY OF "SOFT SAWDER" AND "HUMAN NATUR'"

I HAD heard of Yankee clock peddlers, tin peddlers, and Bible peddlers, especially of him who sold polyglot Bibles—all in English—to the amount of sixteen thousand pounds. The house of every substantial farmer has three substantial ornaments: a wooden clock, a tin reflector, and a polyglot Bible.

How is it that an American can sell his wares at what ever price he pleases where a Bluenose would fail to make a sale at all? I will inquire of the Clockmaker the secret of his success.

"What a pity it is, Mr. Slick"—for such was his name—"what a pity it is," said I, "that you, who are so successful in teaching these people the value of clocks, could not also teach them the value of time."

"I guess," said he, "they have got that ring to grow on their horns yet which every four-year-old has in our country. . . ."

"But how is it," said I, "that you manage to sell such an immense number of clocks, which certainly cannot be called necessary

articles, among people with whom there seems to be so great a scarcity of money?''

Mr. Slick paused as if considering the propriety of answering the question and, looking me in the face, said, in a confidential tone, ''Why, I don't care if I do tell you; for the market is glutted, and I shall quit this circuit. It is done by a knowledge of soft sawder and human natur'. But here is Deacon Flint's,'' said he. ''I have but one clock left, and I guess I will sell it to him.''

At the gate of a most comfortable looking farm house stood Deacon Flint, a respectable old man who had understood the value of time better than most of his neighbours. . . . After the usual salutation, an invitation to ''alight'' was accepted by Mr. Slick, who said he wished to take leave of Mrs. Flint before he left Colchester.

We had hardly entered the house before the Clockmaker, pointing to the view from the window, and addressing himself to me, said, ''If I was to tell them in Connecticut that there was such a farm as this away Down East here in Nova Scotia, they wouldn't believe me. Why, there ain't such a location in all New England. The Deacon has a hundred acres of dyke—''

''Seventy,'' said the Deacon, ''only seventy.''

''Well, seventy; but then there is your fine deep bottom. Why, I could run a ramrod into it—''

"*Interval* we call it," said the Deacon, who, though evidently pleased at this eulogium, seemed to wish the experiment of the ramrod to be tried in the right place.

"Well, interval if you please—though Professor Eleazer Cumstick, in his work on Ohio, calls them bottoms—is jist as good as dyke. Then there is that water privilege, worth three or four thousand dollars, twice as good as what Governor Cass paid fifteen thousand dollars for. I wonder, Deacon, you don't put up a cardin' mill on it; the same works would carry a turnin' lathe, a shingle machine, a circular saw, grind bark, and—"

"Too old," said the Deacon, "too old for all these speculations—"

"Old!" repeated the Clockmaker. "Not you. Why, you are worth half a dozen of the young men we see now-a-days. You are young enough to have—" Here he said something in a lower tone of voice which I did not distinctly hear; but, whatever it was, the Deacon was pleased: he smiled and said he did not think of such things now.

"But your beasts, dear me, your beasts must be put in and have a feed. . . ."

As the old gentleman closed the door after him, Mr. Slick drew near to me and said in an undertone, "That is what I call *soft sawder*. . . ."

"Now I find—"

Here his lecture on soft sawder was cut short by the entrance of Mrs. Flint.

"Jist come to say good-bye, Mrs. Flint."

"What, have you sold all your clocks?"

"Yes, and very low too; for money is scarce, and I wished to close the concarn. I am wrong in sayin' all; for I have jist one left. Neighbour Steel's wife asked to have the refusal of it, but I guess I won't sell it. I had but two of 'em, this one and the feller of it that I sold to Governor Lincoln. Gineral Green, the Secretary of State for Maine, said he'd give me fifty dollars for this here one—it has composition wheels and patent axles; it is a beautiful article, a rael first chop, no mistake, genu*ine* superfine—but I guess I'll take it back. And, besides, Squire Hawk might think kinder hard that I did not give him the offer."

"Dear me," said Mrs. Flint, "I should like to see it. Where is it?"

"It is in a chest of mine over the way, at Tom Tape's store. I guess he can ship it on to Eastport."

"That's a good man," said Mrs. Flint, "jist let's look at it."

Mr. Slick, willing to oblige, yielded to these entreaties and soon produced the clock, a gaudy, highly varnished, trumpery-looking affair. He placed it on the chimney piece, where its beauties were pointed out and duly appreciated by Mrs. Flint, whose admiration was about ending in a proposal when Mr. Flint returned from giving his directions about the care of the horses.

The Deacon praised the clock. He too thought it a handsome one; but the Deacon was a prudent man—he had a watch—he was sorry—but he had no occasion for a clock.

"I guess you're in the wrong furrow this time, Deacon. It ain't for sale," said Mr. Slick. "And if it was, I reckon Neighbour Steel's wife would have it; for she gives me no peace about it."

Mrs. Flint said Mr. Steel had enough to do, poor man, to pay his interest without buying clocks for his wife.

"It's no concarn of mine," said Mr. Slick, "as long as he pays me, what he has to do; but I guess I don't want to sell it. And, besides, it comes too high; that clock can't be made at Rhode Island under forty dollars."

"Why, it ain't possible," said the Clockmaker, in apparent surprise, looking at his watch, "why, as I'm alive, it is four o'clock, and if I ha'n't been two hours here. How on airth shall I reach River Philip to-night? I'll tell you what, Mrs. Flint. I'll leave the clock in your care until I return on my way to the States. I'll set it a-goin' and put it to the right time."

As soon as this operation was performed, he delivered the key to the Deacon with a sort of serio-comic injunction to wind up the clock every Saturday night. . . .

"That," said the Clockmaker, as soon as we were mounted, "that I call *human natur'*. Now, that clock is sold for forty dollars. It

cost me jist six dollars and fifty cents. Mrs. Flint will never let Mrs. Steel have the refusal; nor will the Deacon larn until I call for the clock . . . how hard it is to give it up. We can do without any article of luxury we have never had, but . . . it is not in human natur' to surrender it voluntarily. Of fifteen thousand sold by myself and my partners in this Province, twelve thousand were left in this manner; and only ten clocks were ever returned. . . . We trust to soft sawder to get them into the house, and to human natur' that they never come out of it.''

MR. SLICK COMMENTS ON HIS FATHER'S SHREWDNESS IN BARGAINING

"I RAISED a four year-old colt once, half blood, a perfect pictur' of a horse and a genu*ine* clipper—could gallop like the wind; a rael daisy, perfect doll,—had an eye like a weasel and nostril like Commodore Rodger's speakin' trumpet. Well, I took it down to the races at New York, and father he went along with me; for sais he, 'Sam, you don't know everything, I guess; you ha'n't cut your wisdom teeth yet, and you are goin' among them that's had 'em through their gums this while past.'

"Well, we gets to the races, father he gets colt and puts him in an old waggon with a worn-out Dutch harness and breast band. He looked like Old Nick; that's a fact. Then he fastened a head martingale on and buckled it to the girth twixt his fore legs. Sais I, 'Father, what on airth are you at? I vow I feel ashamed to be seed with such a catamaran as that, and colt looks like Old Saytan himself! no soul would know him.'

" 'I guess I warn't born yesterday,' sais he. 'Let me be; I know what I am at. I guess I'll slip it into 'em afore I've done as slick as a

whistle. I guess I can see as far into a mill stone as the best on 'em.'

"Well, father never entered the horse at all but stood by and seed the races; and the winnin' horse was followed about by a matter of two or three thousand people a-praisin' of him and admirin' him. They seemed as if they never had seed a horse afore. The owner of him was all up on eend a-boastin' of him and a-stumpin the course to produce a horse to run agin him for four hundred dollars. Father goes up to him, looking as soft as dough and as meechin' as you please; and sais he, 'Friend, it tante every one that has four hundred dollars; it's a plaguy sight of money, I tell *you*. Would you run for one hundred dollars and give me a little start? If you would, I'd try my colt out of my old wagon agin you, I vow.'

" 'Let's look at your horse,' sais he.

"So away they went and a proper sight of people arter them to look at colt; and when they seed him, they sot up such a larf I felt e'en a'most ready to cry for spite. Sais I to myself, 'What can possess the old man to act arter that fashion? I do believe he has taken leave of his senses.'

" 'You needn't larf,' said father, "he's smarter than he looks. Our minister's old horse, Captain Jack, is reckoned as quick a beast of his age as any in our location, and that are colt beat him for a lick of a quarter of a mile easy; I seed it myself.' Well they

larfed ag'in louder than afore; and sais father, 'If you dispute my word, try me. What odds will you give?'

"'Two to one,' sais the owner, 'eight hundred to four hundred dollars.'

"'Well, that's a great deal of money, ain't it?' sais father. 'If I was to lose it, I'd look pretty foolish, wouldn't I? How folks would pass their jokes at me when I went home ag'in. You wouldn't take that are waggon and harness for fifty dollars of it, would you?' sais he.

"'Well,' sais the other, 'sooner than disappoint you, as you seem to have set your heart on losing your money, I don't care if I do.'

"As soon as it was settled, father drives off to the stables and then returns mounted with a red silk pocket handkerchief tied around his head and colt a-lookin' like himself, as proud as a nabob, chock-full of spring like the wire eend of a bran new pair of trowsers' galluses.

"One sais, 'That's a plaguy nice lookin' colt that are old feller has arter all.'

"'That horse will show play for it yet,' sais a third.

"And I heerd one feller say, 'I guess that's a rigular Yankee trick, a complete take-in.'

"They had a fair start for it, and off they sot. Father took the lead and kept it and won the race, tho' it was a pretty tight scratch; for father was too old to ride colt,—he was near about the matter of seventy years

old. Well, when the colt was walked round arter the race, there was an amazin' crowd arter him, and several wanted to buy him.

"'But,' sais father, 'how am I to get home without him, and what shall I do with that are waggon and harness so far as I be from Slickville?' So he kept them in talk till he felt their pulses pretty well; and at last he closed with a Southerner for seven hundred dollars, and we returned, havin' made a considerable good spec of colt.

"Sais father to me, 'Sam,' sais he, 'you seed the crowd a-follerin' the winnin' horse when we came there, didn't you?'

"'Yes, sir', sais I, 'I did.'

"'Well, when colt beat him, no one follered him at all but come an' crowded about *him*. That's popularity,' sais he, 'soon won, soon lost; cried up sky-high one minit' and desarted the next or run down. Colt will share the same fate. He'll get beat afore long, and then he's done for.'"

LITTLE WOLF-WILLOW

OLD Beaver-Tail hated many things but most of all he hated the North-West Mounted Police. Not that they had ever molested or worried him in his far corner of the Crooked Lakes Indian Reserve, but they stood for the enforcing of the white man's laws, and old Beaver-Tail hated the white man. He would sit for hours together in his big tepee counting his piles of furs, smoking, grumbling and storming at the inroads of the palefaces on to his lands and hunting grounds. Consequently it was an amazing surprise to everybody when he consented to let his eldest son, Little Wolf-Willow, go away to attend the Indian School in far-off Manitoba. But old Beaver-Tail explained with rare appreciation his reasons for this consent. He said he wished the boy to learn English, so that he would grow up to be a keen, sharp trader, like the men of the Hudson's Bay Company, the white men who were so apt to outwit the redskins in a fur-trading bargain. Thus we see that poor old Beaver-Tail had suffered and been cheated at the hands of the cunning paleface. Little Wolf-Willow was not little, by any means; he was tall, thin, wiry, and

quick, a boy of marked intelligence and much ability. He was called Little Wolf-Willow to distinguish him from his grandsire, Big Wolf-Willow by name, whose career as a warrior made him famed throughout half of the great Canadian North-West. Little Wolf-Willow's one idea of life was to grow up and be like his grandfather, the hero of fifty battles against both hostile Indian tribes and invading white settlers; to have nine scalps at his belt, and scars on his face; to wear a crimson-tipped eagle feather in his hair, and to give a war-whoop that would echo from lake to lake and plant fear in the hearts of his enemies. But instead of all this splendid life the boy was sent away to the school taught by paleface men and women; to a terrible, far-away, strange school, where he would have to learn a new language and perhaps wear clothes like the white men wore. The superintendent of the school, who had persuaded old Beaver-Tail to let the boy come, brought him out from the Crooked Lakes with several other boys. Most of them could speak a few words of English, but not so Little Wolf-Willow, who arrived from his prairie tepee dressed in buckskin and moccasins, a pretty string of white elks' teeth about his throat, and his long, straight, black hair braided in two plaits, interwoven with bits of rabbit skin. A dull green blanket served as an overcoat, and he wore no hat at all. His face was small, and beautifully

tinted a rich, reddish copper colour, and his eyes were black, alert, and very shining.

The teachers greeted him very kindly, and he shook hands with them gravely, like a very old man. And from that day onward Little Wolf-Willow shut his heart within himself, and suffered.

In the first place, the white people all looked sick to him—unhealthy, bleached. Then, try as he would, he could not accustom his feet to the stiff leather shoes he was induced to wear. One morning his buckskin coat was missing, and in its place was a nice blue cloth one with gleaming golden buttons. He hated it, but he had to wear it. Then his green blanket disappeared; a warm, heavy overcoat in its place. Then his fringed buckskin "chaps" went; in their place a pair of dreadful grey cloth trousers. Little Wolf-Willow made no comment, but he kept his eyes and ears open, and mastered a few important words of English, which, however, he kept to himself—as yet. And then, one day, when he had worn these hated clothes for a whole month, the superintendent who had brought him away from his father's tepee sent for him to come to his little office. The boy went. The superintendent was so kind and so gentle, and his smile was so true, that the boy had grown somewhat attached to him, so, without fear of anything in the world, the little Cree scholar slipped noiselessly into the room.

"Ah, Little Wolf-Willow," said the superintendent, kindly, "I notice that you are beginning to understand a little English already." The boy smiled, and nodded slightly. "You are very quick and smart, my boy—quick as a lynx, smart as a fox. Now tell me, are you happy here? Do you like the school?" continued Mr. Enderby.

There was a brief silence, then a direct, straight look from the small Cree eyes, and the words, "I like you—me."

Mr. Enderby smiled. "That's good; I like you, too, Little Wolf-Willow. Now tell me, do you like your new clothes?"

"No good," said the boy.

Mr. Enderby looked grave. "But my boy, that is what you must wear if you are educated. Do you know what the word 'education' means? Have you ever heard the teachers or boys here use it?"

"White man, English," came the quick reply.

"That's it; you have described it exactly. To become educated you must try and wear and do what the white people do—like the English, as you say," Mr. Enderby went on. "Now what about your hair? White men don't wear long hair, and you see all the Cree boys in the school have let me cut their hair. Wouldn't you like to be like them?"

"No; hair good," said the boy.

"Well, how about a 'white' name?" asked Mr. Enderby. "The other boys have taken

them. Wouldn't you like me to call you John? I'd like to."

"Me Wolf-Willow, same grandfather," came in tones of pronounced decision.

"Very well, Little Wolf-Willow, you must do as you like, you know; but you said when you came in that you liked me, and I like you very much. Perhaps some day you will do these things to please me." Then Mr. Enderby added softly to himself, "It will all come in time. It is pretty hard to ask any boy to give up his language, his clothes, his customs, his old-time way of living, his name, even the church of his fathers. I must have patience, patience!"

"You speak?" asked the boy.

"Just to myself," said Mr. Enderby.

"I speak," said the little Indian, standing up and looking fearlessly into the superintendent's face. "I speak. I keep hair, good. I keep name Wolf-Willow, good. I keep skin Indian colour. I not white man's skin. English skin no good. My skin best, good."

Mr. Enderby laughed. "No, no, Little Wolf-Willow, we won't try to change the colour of your skin," he said.

"No good try. I keep skin, better skin than white man. I keep skin, me." And the next instant he was gone.

Miss Watson, the matron, appeared at the door. "What have you done to Little Wolf-Willow?" she asked in surprise. "Why, he

is careering down the hall at a breakneck speed."

"I believe the child thought I was going to skin him, to make a white boy out of him," laughed Mr. Enderby.

"Poor little chap! I expect you wanted to cut off his hair," said Miss Watson, "and perhaps call him Tom, Dick, Harry, or some such name."

"I did," answered the superintendent. "The other boys have all come to it."

"Yes, I know they have," agreed Miss Watson, "but there is something about that boy that makes me think that you'll never get his hair or his name away from him."

And she was right. They never did.

It was six years before Little Wolf-Willow again entered the door of his father's tepee. He returned to the Crooked Lakes speaking English fluently, and with the excellent appointment of interpreter for the Government Indian Agent. The instant his father saw him, the alert Cree eye noted the uncut hair. Nothing could have so pleased old Beaver-Tail. He had held for years a fear in his heart that the school would utterly rob him of his boy. Little Wolf-Willow's mother arose from preparing an antelope stew for supper. She looked up into her son's face. When he left he had not been as high as her ear tips. With the wonderful intuition of mothers the world over, she knew at the first

glance that they had not made him into a white man. Years seemed to roll from her face. She had been so fearful lest he should not come back to their old prairie life.

"Rest here," she said, in the gentle Cree tongue. "Rest here, Little Wolf-Willow; it is your home."

The boy himself had been almost afraid to come. He had grown accustomed to sleeping in a house, in a bed, to wearing shoes, to eating the white man's food; but the blood of the prairies leaped in his veins at the sight of the great tepee, with its dry sod floor spread with wolf-skins and ancient buffalo hides. He flung himself on to the furs and the grass, his fingers threading themselves through the buckskin fringes that adorned old Beaver-Tail's leggings.

"Father," he cried out, in the quaint Cree tongue, "father, sire of my own, I have learned the best the white man had to give, but they have not changed me, or my heart, any more than they could change the copper tint of my skin."

Old Beaver-Tail fairly chuckled, then replied, between pipe puffs, "Some of our Cree boys go to school. They learn the white man's way, and they are of no more use to their people. They cannot trap for furs, nor scout, nor hunt, nor find a prairie trail. You are wiser than that, Little Wolf-Willow. You are smarter than when you left us, but you return to us, the old people of your

tribe, just the same—just the same as your father and grandfather.

"Not quite the same," replied the boy, cautiously, "for, father, I do not now hate the North-West Mounted Police."

For answer, old Beaver-Tail snarled like a husky dog. "You'll hate them again when you live here long enough!" he muttered. "And if you have any friends among them, keep those friends distant, beyond the rim of the horizon. I will not have their scarlet coats showing here."

Wisely, the boy did not reply, and that night, rolled in coyote skins, he slept like a little child once more on the floor of his father's tepee.

For many months after that he travelled about the great prairies, visiting with the Government Indian Agent many distant camps and Cree lodges. He always rode astride a sturdy little buckskin-coloured cayuse. Like most Indian boys, he was a splendid horseman, steady in his seat, swift of eye, and sure of every prairie trail in all Saskatchewan. He always wore a strange mixture of civilized and savage clothes — fringed buckskin "chaps," beaded moccasins, a blue flannel shirt, a scarlet silk handkerchief knotted around his throat, a wide-brimmed cowboy hat with a rattlesnake skin as a hatband, and two magnificent bracelets of ivory elks' teeth. His braided hair, his young, clean, thin, dark face, his fearless rid-

ing, began to be known far and wide. The men of the Hudson's Bay Company trusted him. The North-West Mounted Police loved him. The white traders admired him. But most of all, he stood fast in the affection of his own Indian people. They never forgot the fact that, had he wished, he could have stayed with the white people altogether, that he was equal to them in English education, but he did not choose to do so—he was one of their own for all time.

But one dreadful night Corporal Manan of the North-West Mounted Police rode into barracks at Regina with a serious, worried face. He reported immediately to his captain. "A bad business, captain," he said, coming to attention, " a very bad business, sir. I have reports from old 'Scotty' McIntyre's ranch up north that young Wolf-Willow, that we all know so well, has been caught rustling cattle—cut out two calves sir, and—well, he's stolen them, sir, and old Scotty is after him with a shot-gun."

"Too bad, too bad!" said the captain, with genuine concern. "Young Wolf-Willow gone wrong! I can hardly believe it. How old is he, Corporal?

"About sixteen or seventeen, I should say, sir."

"Too bad!" again said the captain. "Well educated; fine boy, too. What good has it done him? It seems these Indians *will* cut up. Education seems to only make them worse,

Corporal. He'll feel arrest less from you than most of us. You'll have to go. Start early, at daylight, and bring him in to prison when you return."

"*I?*" fairly shouted Corporal Manan. "I arrest young Wolf-Willow? No, sir! You'll have to get another policeman."

"You'll do as you receive orders," blurted the captain, then added more graciously, "Why, Manan, don't you see how much better it is to arrest him? Scotty is after him with a shotgun, and he'll kill the boy on sight. Wolf-Willow is safest here. You leave at daylight, and bring him in, if you have to handcuff him to do it."

Corporal Manan spent a miserable night. Never had a task been so odious to him. He loved the bright, handsome Cree boy, and his heart was sore that he had gone wrong, after giving such promise of a fine, useful manhood. But the white settlers' cattle must be protected, and orders were orders—a soldier must obey his superior officer. So, at daybreak, the fastest horse in the service was saddled, and Corporal Manan was hard on the trail of the young Cree thief.

But Little Wolf-Willow knew nothing of all this. Far away up the northern plains a terrible bit of news had come to him. At the Hudson's Bay post he had been told that his old grandfather had been caught stealing cattle, that the North-West Mounted Police were after him, that they would surely cap-

ture him and put him in Regina jail. The boy was horrified. His own old grandfather a thief! He knew that old warrior well enough—knew that he was innocent of intentional crime; knew that, should the scarlet-coated police give chase, the old Indian would never understand, but would probably fire and kill the man who attempted to arrest him. The boy knew that, with his own perfect knowledge of English, he could explain everything away if only he could be at his grandfather's in time, or else intercept the police before they should arrest him. His grandfather would shoot; the boy knew it. Then there would be bloodshed added to theft. But Big Wolf-Willow's lodge was ninety miles distant, and it was the middle of a long, severe winter. What was to be done? One thing only—he, Little Wolf-Willow, must ride, ride, ride! He must not waste an hour, or the prison at Regina would have his grandfather, and perhaps a gallant soldier of the king would meet his death doing his duty.

Thrusting a pouch of pemmican into his shirt front, and fastening his buckskin coat tightly across his chest, he flung himself on to his wiry little cayuse, faced about to the north-east, and struck the trail for the lodges of his own people. Then began the longest, most terrible ride of his life. Afterwards, when he became a man, he often felt that he lived through years and years during that ninety-mile journey. On all sides of him

stretched the blinding white, snow-covered prairie. Not a tree, not an object to mark the trail. The wind blew straight and level directly down from the Arctic zone, icy, cutting, numbing. It whistled past his ears, pricking and stinging his face like a whiplash. The cold, yellow sunlight on the snow blinded him, like a light flashed from a mirror. Not a human habitation, not a living thing, lay in his path. Night came, with countless stars and a joyous crescent of Northern Lights hanging low in the sky, and the intense, still cold that haunts the prairie country. He grudged the hours of rest he must give his horse, pitying the poor beast for its lack of food and water, but compelled to urge it on and on. After what seemed a lifetime of hardship, both boy and beast began to weaken. The irresistible sleepiness that forebodes freezing began to overcome Little Wolf-Willow. Utter exhaustion was sapping the strength of the cayuse. But they blundered on, mile after mile, both with the pluck of the prairies in their red blood; colder, slower, wearier, they became. Little Wolf-Willow's head was whirling, his brain thickening, his fingers clutching aimlessly. The bridle reins slipped from his hands. Hunger, thirst, cold, exhaustion, overpowered both horse and rider. The animal stumbled once, twice, then fell like a dead weight.

* * * *

At daybreak, Corporal Manan, hot on the pursuit of the supposed young cattle thief, rode up the freezing trail, headed for the north-east. A mile ahead of him he saw what he thought was a dead steer which the coyotes had probably killed and were eating. As he galloped nearer he saw it was a horse. An exclamation escaped his lips. Then, slipping from his own mount, stiff and half frozen himself, he bent pityingly above the dead animal that lay with the slender body of an Indian hugging up to it for warmth.

"Poor little chap!" choked the Corporal. "Poor Little Wolf-Willow! Death's got him now, I'm afraid, and that's worse than the Mounted Police."

Then the soldier knelt down, and for two long hours rubbed with snow and his own fur cap the thin, frozen face and hands of the almost lifeless boy. He rolled the lithe young body about, pounding it and beating it, until consciousness returned, and the boy opened his eyes dully.

"That's better," said the Corporal. "Now, my lad, it's for home!" Then he stripped himself of his own great coat, wrapped it snugly about the young Indian, and, placing the boy on his own horse, he trudged ahead on foot—five, ten, fifteen miles of it, the boy but half conscious and freezing, the man tramping ahead, footsore, chilled through, and troubled, the horse with hanging head

and lagging step—a strange trio to enter the Indian camp.

From far off old Beaver-Tail had seen the approaching bit of hated scarlet—the tunic worn by the North-West Mounted Police—but he made no comment as Corporal Manan lifted in his strong arms the still figure from the saddle, and, carrying it into the tepee, laid it beside the fire on the warm wolf skins and buffalo hides. It took much heat and nourishment before Little Wolf-Willow was able to interpret the story from the Cree tongue into English, then back again into Cree, and so be the go-between for the Corporal and old Beaver-Tail. "Yes, my grandfather, Big Wolf-Willow, is here," said the boy, his dark eyes looking fearlessly into the Corporal's blue ones. "He's here, as you see, and I suppose you will have to arrest him. He acknowledges he took the cattle. He was poor, hungry, starving. You see, Corporal, he cannot speak English, and he does not understand the white men or their laws. He says for me to tell you that the white men came and stole all our buffaloes, the millions of beautiful animals that supplied us with hides to make our tepees, furs to dress in, meat to eat, fat to keep us warm; so he thought it no harm to take two small calves when he was hungry. He asks if anyone arrested and punished the white men who took all his buffaloes, and, if not, why should he be arrested and punished for doing far

less wrong than the wrong done by the white man?''

''But—but—'' stammered Corporal Manan, ''I'm not after *him.* It is *you* I was told to arrest.''

''Oh, why didn't I know? Why didn't I know it was I you were after?'' cried the boy. ''I would have let you take me, handcuff me, anything, for I understand, but he does not.''

Corporal Manan stood up, shaking his shoulders as a big dog shakes after a plunge. Then he spoke: ''Little Wolf-Willow, can you ever forgive us all for thinking you were a cattle thief? When I think of your grandfather's story of the millions of buffaloes he has lost, and those two paltry calves he took for food, I make no arrests here. My captain must do what he thinks best.''

''And you saved me from freezing to death, and brought me home on your own horse, when you were sent out to take me to prison!'' muttered the boy, turning to his soldier friend with admiration.

But old Beaver-Tail interrupted. He arose, held out his hand towards the once hated scarlet-coated figure, and spoke the first words he had ever voiced in English. They were, ''North-West Mounted Police, good man, he. Beaver-Tail's friend.''

THE CONSPIRACY OF PONTIAC

MEANWHILE the white flag had again been raised by the Indians upon the bombproof; and this having been readily met by a corresponding signal from the fort, a numerous band of savages now issued from the cover with which their dark forms had hitherto been identified, and spread themselves far and near upon the common. On this occasion they were without arms, offensive or defensive, of any kind, if we may except the knife which was always carried at the girdle, and which constituted a part rather of their necessary dress than of their war-like equipment. These warriors might have been about five hundred in number, and were composed chiefly of picked men from the nations of the Ottawas, the Delawares, and the Shawanees; each race being distinctly recognizable from the others by certain peculiarities of form and feature which individualized, if we may so term it, the several tribes. Their only covering was the legging before described, composed in some instances of cloth, but principally of smoked deerskin, and the flap that passed through the girdle around the loins, by which the straps attached to the leggings

were secured. Their bodies, necks and arms were, with the exception of a few slight ornaments, entirely naked; and even the blanket that served them as a couch by night and a covering by day, had, with one single exception, been dispensed with, apparently with a view to avoid all encumbrance in their approaching sport. Each individual was provided with a stout sapling of about three feet in length, curved and flattened at the root extremity, like that used at the Irish hurdle; which game, in fact, the manner of ball playing among the Indians in every way resembled.

Interspersed among these warriors were a nearly equal number of squaws. These were to be seen lounging carelessly about in small groups and were of all ages; from the hoary-headed, shrivelled up hag, whose eyes still sparkled with a fire that her lank and attenuated frame denied, to the young girl of twelve, whose dark and glowing cheek, rounded bust and penetrating glance bore striking evidence of the precociousness of Indian beauty. These latter looked with evident interest on the sports of the young warriors, who, throwing down their hurdles, either vied with each other in the short but incredibly swift foot-race, or indulged themselves in wrestling and leaping; while their companions, abandoned to the full security that they felt to be attached to the white flag waving on the fort, lay at their lazy length upon the sward,

ostensibly following the movements of the several competitors in these sports, but in reality with heart and eye directed solely to the fortification that lay beyond. Each of these females in addition to the machecoti or petticoat, which in one solid square of broadcloth was tightly wrapped around the loins, also carried a blanket loosely thrown around the person, but closely confined over the shoulders in front, and reaching below the knee. There was an air of constraint in their movements, which accorded ill with the occasion of festivity for which they were assembled; and it was remarkable, whether it arose from deference to those to whom they were slaves as well as wives and daughters, or from whatever other cause it might be, none of them ventured to recline themselves upon the sward in imitation of the warriors.

When it had been made known to the Governor that the Indians had begun to develop themselves upon the common unarmed, yet redolent with the spirit that was to direct their meditated sports, the soldiers were dismissed from their respective companies to the ramparts; where they were now to be seen, not drawn up in formidable and hostile array, but collected together in careless groups, and simply in their sidearms. This reciprocation of confidence on the part of the garrison was acknowledged by the Indians with marks of approbation, expressed as much by the sudden and classic disposition of their fine forms

into attitudes strikingly illustrative of their admiration and pleasure as by the interjectional sounds that passed from one to the other of the throng. From the increased alacrity with which they now lent themselves to the preparatory and inferior amusements of the day, it was evident their satisfaction was complete. Hitherto the principal chiefs had, as on the previous occasion, occupied the bombproof; and now, as then, they appeared to be deliberating among themselves, but evidently in a more energetic and serious manner. At length they separated, when Pontiac, accompanied by the chiefs who had attended him on a former day, once more led in the direction of the fort. The moment of his advance was the signal for the commencement of the principal game. In an instant those of the warriors who lay reclining on the sward sprang to their feet, while the wrestlers and racers resumed their hurdles, and prepared themselves for the trial of mingled skill and swiftness. At first, they formed a dense group in the centre of the common; and then diverging into two equal files both to the right and to the left of the immediate centre, where the large ball was placed, formed an open chain, extending from the skirt of the forest to the commencement of the village. On the one side were ranged the Delawares and Shawanees, and on the other the more numerous nations of the Ottawas. The women of these several tribes, apparently

much interested in the issue of an amusement in which the manliness and activity of their respective friends were staked, had gradually and imperceptibly gained the front of the fort, where they were now huddled in groups, at about twenty paces from the drawbridge, and bending eagerly forward to command the movements of the ball players.

In his circuit round the walls, Pontiac was seen to remark the confiding appearance of the unarmed soldiery with a satisfaction that was not sought to be disguised; and from the manner in which he threw his glance along each face of the rampart, it was evident his object was to embrace the numerical strength collected there. It was moreover observed when he passed the groups of squaws on his way to the gate, he addressed some words in a strange tongue to the elder matrons of each.

Once more the dark warriors were received at the gate by Major Blackwater; and, as with firm but elastic tread, they moved across the square, each threw his eyes rapidly and anxiously around, and with less of concealment in his manner than had been manifested upon a former occasion. On every hand the same air of nakedness and desertion met their gaze. Not even a soldier of the guard was to be seen; and when they cast their eyes upwards to the windows of the block-house, they were found to be tenantless as the air through which they passed. A gleam of fierce satisfaction pervaded the swarthy countenances of

the Indians; and the features of Pontiac, in particular, expressed the deepest exultation. Instead of leading his party, he now brought up the rear; and, when arrived in the centre of the fort, he, without any visible cause for the accident, stumbled and fell to the earth. The other chiefs for the moment lost sight of their ordinary gravity, and marked their sense of the circumstance by a prolonged sound, partaking of the mingled character of a laugh and a yell. Startled at the cry, Major Blackwater, who was in front, turned to ascertain the cause. At that moment Pontiac sprang lightly again to his feet, responding to the yell of his confederates by another, even more startling, fierce and prolonged than theirs. He then stalked proudly to the head of the party, and even preceded Major Blackwater into the Council Room.

In this rude theatre of conference some changes had been made since their recent visit, which escaped not the observation of the quick-sighted chiefs. Their mats lay in the position they had previously occupied, and the chairs of the officers were placed as before, but the room itself had been considerably enlarged. The slight partition terminating the interior extremity of the mess-room, and dividing it from that of one of the officers, had been removed; and midway through this, extending entirely across, was drawn a curtain of scarlet cloth, against which the imposing figure of the Governor, elevated as

his seat was above those of the other officers, was thrown into strong relief. There was another change that escaped not the observation of the Indians, and that was, not more than half of the officers who had been present at the first conference were now in the room. Of these latter, one had, moreover, been sent away by the Governor the moment the chiefs were ushered in.

"Ugh!" ejaculated the proud leader, as he took his seat unceremoniously, and yet not without reluctance, upon the mat. "The Council Room of my father is bigger than when the Ottawa was here before, yet the number of his chiefs is not so many."

"The great chief of the Ottawas knows that the Saganaw has promised the redskins a feast," returned the Governor. "Were he to leave it to his young warriors to provide it, he would not be able to receive the Ottawa like a great chief, and to make peace with him as he could wish."

"My father has a great deal of cloth, red, like the blood of a paleface," pursued the Indian, rather in demand than in observation, as he pointed with his finger to the opposite end of the room. "When the Ottawa was here last he did not see it."

"The great chief of the Ottawas knows that the great father of the Saganaws has a big heart to make presents to the red-skins. The cloth the Ottawa sees there is sufficient to

make leggings for the chiefs of all the nations."

Apparently satisfied with this reply, the fierce Indian uttered one of his strong guttural and assentient "ughs", and then commenced filling the pipe of peace, correct on the present occasion in all its ornaments, which was handed to him by the Delaware chief. It was remarked by the officers that this operation took up an unusually long portion of his time, and that he frequently turned his ear, like a horse stirred by the huntsman's horn, with quick and irrepressible eagerness towards the door.

"The pale warrior, the friend of the Ottawa Chief, is not here," said the Governor, as he glanced his eye along the semi-circle of Indians. "How is this? Is his voice still sick that he cannot come? Or has the great chief of the Ottawas forgotten to tell him?"

"The voice of the pale warrior is still sick, and he cannot speak," replied the Indian. "The Ottawa chief is very sorry; for the tongue of his friend the paleface is full of wisdom."

Scarcely had the last words escaped his lips, when a wild, shrill cry from without the fort rang on the ears of the assembled Council, and caused a momentary commotion among the officers. It arose from a single voice, and that voice could not be mistaken by any who had heard it once before. A second or two, during which the officers and

chiefs kept their eyes intently fixed on each other, passed anxiously away, and then, nearer to the gate, apparently on the very drawbridge itself, was pealed forth the wild and deafening yell of a legion of devilish voices. At that sound the Ottawa and the other chiefs sprang to their feet, and their own fierce cry responded to that yet vibrating upon the ears of all. Already were their gleaming tomahawks brandished wildly over their heads, and Pontiac had even bounded a pace forward to reach the Governor with the deadly weapon, when at the sudden stamping of the foot of the latter upon the floor, the scarlet cloth in the rear was thrown aside, and twenty soldiers, their eyes glancing along the barrels of their levelled muskets, met the startled gaze of the astonished Indians.

An instant was enough to satisfy the keen chief of the true state of the case. The calm, composed mien of the officers, not one of whom had even attempted to quit his seat, amid the din by which his ears were so alarmingly assailed—the triumphant, yet dignified, and even severe expression of the Governor's countenance; and above all, the unexpected presence of the prepared soldiery—all these at once assured him of the discovery of his treachery, and the danger that awaited him. The necessity of an immediate attempt to join his warriors without was now obvious to the Ottawa; and scarcely had he conceived the idea before it was sought to be executed. In

a single spring he gained the door of the mess-room, and, followed eagerly and tumultuously by the other chiefs, to whose departure no opposition was offered, in the next moment stood on the steps of the piazza that ran along the front of the building, whence he had issued.

The surprise of the Indians on reaching this point was now too powerful to be dissembled; and, incapable either of advancing or receding, they remained gazing on the scene before them with an air of mingled stupefaction, rage and alarm. Scarcely ten minutes had elapsed since they had proudly strode through the naked area of the fort, and yet, even in that short space of time, its appearance had been entirely changed. Not a part was there now of the surrounding buildings that was not redolent with human life, and hostile preparation. Through every window of the officers' low rooms was to be seen the frowning muzzle of a field-piece, bearing upon the gateway; and behind these were artillery men, holding their lighted matches, supported again by files of bayonets, that glittered in their rear. In the block-houses the same formidable array of field-pieces and muskets was visible; while from the four angles of the square, as many heavy guns that had been artfully masked at the entrance of the chiefs seemed ready to sweep away anything that should come before them. The guard-room near the gate presented the

same hostile front. The doors of this, as well as of the other buildings, had been firmly secured then; but from every window affording cover to the troops, gleamed a line of bayonets, rising above the threatening field-pieces, pointing at a distance of little more than twelve feet, directly upon the gateway. In addition to his musket, each man of the guard, moreover, held a hand grenade, provided with a short fuse that could be ignited in a moment from the matches of the gunners, and with immediate effect. The soldiers in the block-houses were similarly provided.

Almost magical as was the change thus suddenly effected in the appearance of the garrison, it was not the most interesting feature in the exciting scene. Choking up the gateway, in which they were completely wedged, and crowding the drawbridge, a dense mass of dusky Indians were to be seen casting their fierce glances around; yet paralyzed in their movements by the unlooked for display of a resisting force, threatening instant annihilation to those who should attempt either to advance or to recede. Never, perhaps, was astonishment and disappointment more forcibly depicted on the human countenance, than as they were now exhibited by these men, who had already in imagination secured to themselves an easy conquest. They were the warriors who had so recently been engaged in the manly yet innocent exercise of the ball; but, instead of

the harmless hurdle, each now carried a short gun in one hand and a gleaming tomahawk in the other. After the first general yelling heard in the Council Room not a sound was uttered. Their burst of rage and triumph had evidently been checked by the unexpected manner of their reception, and they now stood on the spot on which the further advance of each had been arrested, so silent and motionless, that, but for the rolling of their dark eyes, as they keenly measured the insurmountable barriers that were opposed to their progress, they might almost have been taken for a wild group of statuary.

Conspicuous at the head of these was he who wore the blanket; a tall warrior, on whom rested the startled eye of every officer and soldier who was so situated as to behold him. His face was painted black as death; and, as he stood under the arch of the gateway, with his white turbaned head towering far above those of his companions, this formidable and mysterious enemy might have been likened to the spirit of darkness presiding over his terrible legions.

In order to account for the extraordinary appearance of the Indians, armed in every way for death, at a moment when neither gun nor tomahawk was apparently within miles of their reach, it will be necessary to revert to the first entrance of the chiefs into the fort. The fall of Pontiac had been the effect of design; and the yell pealed forth by him, on

recovering his feet, as if in taunting reply to the laugh of his comrades, was in reality a signal intended for the guidance of the Indians without. These, now following up in their game with increasing spirit, at once changed the direction of their line, bringing the ball nearer to the fort. In their eagerness to effect this object, they had overlooked the gradual secession of the unarmed troops, spectators of their sport, from the ramparts, until scarcely more than twenty stragglers were left. As they neared the gate, the squaws broke up their several groups, and forming a line on either hand of the road leading to the drawbridge, appeared to separate solely with a view not to impede the action of the players. For an instant a dense group collected around the ball, which had been driven to within a hundred yards of the gate, and fifty hurdles were crossed in their endeavours to secure it, when the warrior, who formed the solitary exception to the multitude in his blanket covering, came rapidly up to the spot where the well-affected struggle was maintained. At his approach the hurdles of the other players were withdrawn, when, at a single blow of his powerful arm, the ball was seen flying into the air in an oblique direction and was for a moment lost altogether to the view. When it again met the eye, it was descending perpendicularly into the very centre of the fort.

With the fleetness of thought now commenced a race that had ostensibly for its object the recovery of the lost ball; and in which he, who had driven it with such resistless force, outstripped them all. Their course lay between the two lines of squaws; and scarcely had the heads of the bounding Indians reached the opposite extremity of those lines, when the women suddenly threw back their blankets, and disclosed each a short gun and a tomahawk. To throw away their hurdles and seize upon these was the work of an instant. Already in imagination was the fort their own; and such was the peculiar exultation of the black and turbaned warrior, when he felt the planks of the drawbridge beneath his feet, that all the ferocious joy of his soul was pealed forth in the terrible cry which, rapidly succeeded by that of the other Indians, had resounded so fearfully through the Council Room. What their disappointment was, when on gaining the interior they found the garrison prepared for their reception, has already been shown.

"Secure that traitor, men!" exclaimed the Governor, advancing into the square, and pointing to the black warrior; whose quick eye was now glancing on every side, to discover some assailable point in the formidable defences of the troops.

A laugh of scorn and derision escaped the lips of the warrior. "Is there a man—are there any men, even with Governor de Haldi-

mar at their head, who will be bold enough to attempt it?" he asked. "Nay!" he pursued, stepping boldly a pace or two in front of the wondering savages—"here I stand singly and defy your whole garrison!"

A sudden movement among the soldiers in the guard-room announced they were preparing to execute the orders of their chief. The eye of the black warrior sparkled with ferocious pleasure; and he made a gesture to his followers, which was replied to by the sudden tension of their hitherto relaxed forms into attitudes of expectance and preparation.

"Stay, men; quit not your cover for your lives!" commanded the Governor, in a loud, deep voice:—"Keep the barricades fast and move not."

A cloud of anger and disappointment passed over the features of the black warrior. It was evident the object of his bravado was to draw the troops from their defences, that they might be so mingled with their enemies as to render the cannon useless, unless friends and foes (which was by no means probable) should alike be sacrificed. The Governor had penetrated the design in time to prevent the mischief.

In a moment of uncontrollable rage, the savage warrior aimed his tomahawk at the head of the Governor. The latter stepped lightly aside, and the steel sank with such force into one of the posts supporting the

piazza, that the quivering handle snapped close off at its head. At that moment, a single shot, fired from the guard-house, was drowned in the yell of approbation which burst from the lips of the dark crowd. The turban of the warrior was, however, sent flying through the air, carried away by the force of the bullet which had torn it from his head. He himself was unharmed.

"A narrow escape for us both, Colonel de Haldimar," he observed, as soon as the yell subsided, and with an air of the most perfect unconcern. "Had my tomakawk obeyed the first impulse of my heart, I should have cursed myself and died; as it is, I have reason to avoid all useless exposure of my own life at present. A second bullet may be better directed; and to die, robbed of my revenge, would ill answer the purpose of a life devoted to its attainment. Remember my pledge!"

At the hasty command of the Governor a hundred muskets were raised to the shoulders of his men; but, before a single eye could glance along the barrel, the formidable and active warrior had bounded over the heads of the nearest Indians into a small space that was left unoccupied; when, stooping suddenly to earth, he disappeared altogether from the view of his enemies. A slight moving in the centre of the numerous band crowding the gateway, and extending even beyond the bridge was now discernible; it was like the waving of a field of standing corn, through

which some animal rapidly winds its tortuous course, bending aside as the object advances, and closing again when it has passed. After the lapse of a minute the terrible warrior was seen to spring again to his feet, far in the rear of the band; and then uttering a fierce shout of exultation, to make good his retreat towards the forest.

Meanwhile Pontiac and the other chiefs of the Council continued rooted to the piazza on which they had rushed at the unexpected display of the armed men behind the scarlet curtain. The loud "Waugh" that burst from the lips of all, on finding themselves thus foiled in their schemes of massacre, had been succeeded the instant afterwards by feelings of personal apprehension, which each, however, had collectedness enough to disguise. Once the Ottawa made a movement as if he would have cleared the space that kept him from his warriors; but the emphatical pointing of the finger of Colonel de Haldimar to the levelled muskets of the men in the block-houses prevented him, and the attempt was not repeated. It was marked by the officers who also stood on the piazza, close behind the chiefs, when the black warrior threw his tomahawk at the Governor, a shade of displeasure passed over the features of the Ottawa; and that, when he found the daring attempt was not retaliated on his people, his countenance had been momentarily lighted up with a satisfied expression, apparently mark-

ing his sense of forbearance so unexpectedly shown.

"What says the great chief of the Ottawas now?" asked the Governor calmly, and breaking a profound silence that had succeeded to the last fierce yell of the formidable being just departed. "Was the Saganaw not right, when he said the Ottawa came with guile in his heart, and a lie upon his lips? But the Saganaw is not a fool, and he can read the thoughts of his enemies upon their faces, and long before their lips have spoken."

"Ugh!" ejaculated the Indian; "my father is a great chief, and his head is full of wisdom. Had he been feeble, like the other chiefs of the Saganaw, the stronghold of Detroit must have fallen, and the redskins would have danced their war dance round the scalps of his young men, even in the council room where they came to talk of peace."

"Does the great chief of the Ottawa see the big thunder of the Saganaw?" pursued the Governor: "if not let him open his eyes and look. The Saganaw has but to move his lips, and swifter than lightning would the palefaces sweep away the warriors of the Ottawa, even where they now stand; in less time than the Saganaw is now speaking, would they mow them down like the grass of the prairie."

"Ugh!" again exclaimed the chief, with mixed doggedness and fierceness: "if what

my father says is true, why does he not pour out his anger upon the redskins?"

"Let the great chief of the Ottawas listen," replied the Governor with dignity. "When the great chiefs of all the nations that are now leagued with the Ottawas came last to the Council, the Saganaw knew that they carried deceit in their hearts, and that they never meant to smoke the pipe of peace, or to bury the hatchet in the ground. The Saganaw might have kept them prisoners, that their warriors might be without a head, but he had given his word to the great chief of the Ottawas, and the word of a Saganaw is never broken. Even now, while both the chiefs and the warriors are in his power, he will not slay them, for he wishes to show the Ottawa the desire of the Saganaw is to be friendly with the redskins and not to destroy them. Wicked men from the Canadas have whispered lies in the ear of the Ottawa; but a great chief should judge for himself, and take counsel only from the wisdom of his own heart. The Ottawa and his warriors may go," he resumed, after a short pause; "the path by which they came is again open to them. Let them depart in peace; the big thunder of the Saganaw shall not harm them."

The countenance of the Indian, who had clearly seen the danger of his position, wore an expression of surprise which could not be dissembled; low exclamations passed between

him and his companions; and then, pointing to the tomahawk that lay half buried in the wood, he said, doubtingly—

"It was the paleface, the friend of the great chief of the Ottawas, who struck the hatchet at my father. The Ottawa is not a fool to believe the Saganaw can sleep without revenge."

"The great chief of the Ottawas shall know him better," was the reply. "The young warriors of the Saganaw might destroy their enemies where they now stand, but they seek not their blood. When the Ottawa chief takes counsel from his own heart, and not from the lips of a cowardly dog of a paleface, who strikes his tomahawk and then flies, his wisdom will tell him to make peace with the Saganaw, whose warriors are without treachery, even as they are without fear."

Another of those, deep, interjectional "ughs" escaped the chest of the proud Indian.

"What my father says is good," he returned; "but the paleface is a great warrior and the Ottawa chief is his friend. The Ottawa will go."

He then addressed a few sentences, in a tongue unknown to the officers, to the swarthy and anxious crowd in front. These were answered by a low, sullen yet assentient grunt from the united band, who now turned, though with justifiable caution and mistrust, and recrossed the drawbridge without hin-

drance from the troops. Pontiac waited until the last Indian had departed, and then making a movement to the Governor, which, with all its haughtiness, was meant to mark his sense of the forbearance and good faith that had been manifested, once more stalked proudly and calmly across the area, followed by the remainder of the chiefs. The officers who were with the Governor ascended to the ramparts, to follow their movements; and it was not before their report had been made that the Indians were immerging once more into the heart of the forest, that the troops were withdrawn from their formidable defences, and the gate of the fort again firmly secured.

THE FEATHER

THE stag was brought forth. Well rested but anxious-eyed, he was held with thongs by two men of splendid brown skins, some thirty paces in front of where the chief sat, along the trail leading into the forest.

Hiawatha and the Black Wolverine, the young champions of their respective nations —stripped of all but belt and loin-cloth— bent forward ready for the race, their bronze sinews and muscles gleaming and their faces shining with the smile of contest. Their mothers, seated near by, watched them silently but intensely, their faces shaded by their robes. The thousands of both tribes present bent forward, too, especially the young braves, all pent and tense as full drawn bows. They regarded the stag as a cousin—a man in the guise of a stag.

He was quietly slipped of his thongs.

As soon as the chief of the white breasted tribe felt the lightness of freedom, he drew in one quivering breath through his silken black nostrils and with a lightning bound darted, as if through air, into the woods. A single scream leaped from thousands of throats and the two runners shot after him. Their task

was to defeat the very symbol of fleetness—to run the stag down.

The Sun, the Chief of Chiefs, passing high in the west, looked full upon the contest and rejoiced.

The stag had the whole green forest before him, covering the forty square leagues of the Island; but all knew with native certainty that he would follow some one of a few runs only—for at the commencement the Great River was on his left hand and the Little River on his right; and the smoke-scent of habitations along the Great would drive him to choose the side of the Little; and thus they reasoned for other parts of his flight, for they knew the Sacred Island Tiotiaké* better than he a stranger. Hours passed and the two runners still fled after him, catching at rare intervals a glimpse of red and white hind-quarters amid the distant shadows and being left miles on miles behind again, to be guided only by their unerring nostrils and eyes. The marvel of human endurance was yet to be shown. So, the quill-embroidered ends of their loin-cloths streaming behind them, we leave them running, and increasing in swiftness. After the start, the people returned from the forest to the weedy point, where the Little River ran into the Great, or, as it was mostly called, the River of the Master of Life, for the Master of Life dwelt in its

*"Beside the Up-and-Down", i.e. the Great Rapids—oldest and present Iroquois name for Montreal.

majesty of vast waters and his voice could be heard continually speaking. No other river was so wide or so great. Multitudes of ruddy bark canoes bearing strange insignia of eyes and suns and beasts were drawn up on shore as far as the eye could see, and many smoky topped wigwams of pictured skins were near them, many black-edged pots, sunk in sand beside many little fires, and among the cornfields which held up their tasselled heads over some sixty acres at a little distance off, seven immense, round-topped bark houses stood, each the home of several families of the Men of Men, whose chief town, Hochelaga, was a crow's flight inland. Looking up the shallow gravels of the Little River, the visitors saw the grasses and scrub willows of a marsh whose limits were lost in outlines of distant forest.

Why were all these thousands of the dwellers in wigwams and the dwellers in houses now assembled?

Every year, at full moon of cornharvest, the people of the Northern Lights—scattered hunters of the woods—came in from their fishing haunts by many far off lakes, to meet the Men of Men, the polished race of the town, here where the Pine of Peace, standing alone on this point, dominated for miles the view up and down the River of the Master, and now dwarfed the whole assembly of both tribes into pigmies by its mighty, rough-ribbed girth and straight rise of the height of

thirty braves. And here on the fragrant brown needles beneath it the gifts of both nations were laid, a pile for each band, and the council fire was made ready. There the strangely-painted Sachems of the Wilderness sat down in a wide semi-circle towards the river, and behind them their braves and behind these the multitude of their women and children; while on the side towards the land sat the statesmen and warriors of the Hochelagans, and behind them their women and children. It was easy to distinguish the two races, if only by their ornaments and feathers, for those of the Nation of the Town were rich and well-made, while those of the Wilderness were clumsy and scant. A long and solemn silence was their first tribute of respect to each other.

Awitharoa, Peace Chief of Hochelaga, at length rose, lit the fire of hospitality, and, lifting the brilliant-feathered Calumet between his outstretched hands, presented it first reverently in turn to the gods of the East, the South, the West and the North, passed it to Nikona, the oldest of the People of the Northern Lights, and, facing the assembly under the boughs of the Pine above them, addressed the guest tribe:

"People of the Night-dawn!"

He checked his utterance. A muttering roll was heard in the sky. A high-piled cloud appeared over the woods, advancing rapidly eastward. In it all saw some vivid portent.

The Algonkins discovered it as the mighty bird, the Ahnemeekee, fraught with magic and mishap, flashing its eyes and clapping its great wings together. The Men of Men beheld the glorious form of their Uncle the Thundergod, wrestling overhead with the Stone Giants. In each detonation they heard him smiting them with loud-resounding blows. Neither nation moved or spoke, but the former bowed their heads and the latter held themselves erect.

Then Awitharoa recommenced:

"People of the Night-dawn, be not afraid. We are the nephews of the Thunder.

"It was our Uncle who spoke, who approves of this our meeting. Our Father the Sun is also on high. The gods are with us.

"People of the Night-dawn! Our forefathers met yours here when they first landed on the Island before the memory of any of the living, and this Pine, which then was young, was chosen as the everlasting meeting-place. They cut upon it our Bear; they cut upon it your Rabbit; and these totems have now grown together. The Pine then was small; it has risen to the sky, and its roots are fixed in the country below the earth. That it may never be cut down I give to each of your head-chiefs a belt embroidered with a pine-tree."

"Hoh! Hoh!" all the Algonkins ejaculated approvingly as he placed the shapely belts on the mat before him and continued:

"Your feet are torn by the thorns of the journey ye come. That you may forget the thorns and the cold and have incense for sacrifice, I give you this *asogun,* the noble crop not raised by women, but by great warriors." He pointed to a great heap of fragrant Indian tobacco.

Awitharoa as he spoke moved about with dramatic gestures, according to the custom of their oratory. Thick-set, but all muscle, was the Peace Chief, with small hands and feet, mighty neck cut with deep wrinkles of seasoned power, the face also cut with a mass of sharpened wrinkles made by weather rather than by age; a dark, metallic complexion; eyes so keen that they seemed to see into the bones and heart—a man so generous that his own poor shreds of clothing told the people of his many gifts to others.

"Your eyes have been dimmed in winter by the demon Famine," he continued, as he walked about under the tree.

"We make them clear by this mountain of maize, into which the Chief of the Sky has put his beams; in eating of which you will take the Sun within you to drive the clouds from your sky and that demon from your wigwams.

"You have been tracked in the wilds by the black Windigos who live upon the flesh of men, by demons of waterfalls, of mountains and of dark ravines. I give you for protection these cunning amulets of black stone, the

art of which the Men of Men were taught of old by our Uncle the Thunder, of whom all Windigos are afraid.

"People of the Northern Lights! My nation and yours are one house. Whenever you are hungry come into our doors and sit down by the fires; our women will bring you corn; they will spread you mats; we will pass you the pipe; you shall see through the smoke of it your mothers and brothers."

"Hoh! Hoh!" replied the Algonkin chorus, the people eagerly eyeing the gifts.

Nikona, their patriarch, walked to the orator's place as Awitharoa sat down. A fierce energy lit the eyes which looked out between his bent shoulders; it held together his palsied frame, and stamped the dark face, wrinkled in many folds.

"Our people know not crops nor crafts," he said in a voice shaking with age, but not weak.

"We are not as yours, who can make palisades and houses and amulets: ye are a wonderful nation. But this our country is large; it feeds thousands of deer, and there are none like the Algonkins in the killing of stags. I give you, then, these many pelts of buckskin which will make leggings and mocassins for your women to embroider, and here is fawn skin for white pouches for braves and for your feet at the dances. Our swamps are fat with nations of beaver, and as we slay them

we tell them that their skins shall be beds and robes for our friends the Nephews of the Thunder, and then they die gladly. Therefore, Nephews of the Thunder, I give you this hill of beaver skins. Also for the warriors I give these bark parcels of war paint from the lake where the Bright One placed it Onomening. And from the shore of the mighty Salt Lake we bring you these strings of shell wampum which is precious. Hang it in the house of your Council that it may say to you whenever you are gathered together, 'What is more beautiful than *peace*.' And to thee, Awitharoa, I give this axe of the sharp green copper we have brought from the Sorcerers of the Sunset. It is full of magic for cutting of trees and slaying of foes."

"Hoh! Hoh!" all the Hochelagans responded. "Hee a hee ee hoh!"—because of the pearly sheen of the polished wampum and the red shining of the axes.

Other orators having spoken, until the sun had passed far down towards his Red Tepee, the two divisions of the assembly thronged forward together to the partition of the presents. The Algonkin women were already loading the first portions on each other's backs for removal to the canoes, when a shout echoed and re-echoed in the woods just across the Little River.

The women threw down their loads of maize and tobacco, braves hastily ran for

their boats, the chiefs and great warriors disdainfully looked round, and all, as by one movement, faced the opposite bank. They saw issuing from the trees along it the stag. But how changed! No more a chief in mien, he tottered towards the water, a red-streaked froth dripping from his lips, his tongue hung out on one side, his eyes were dull, his nostrils quivered with fear, broad stripes of perspiration moistened his sides, and his failing limbs struck against one another. Another movement and young Hiawatha sprang out, dishevelled and red, not fresh as at the start, but withal like a man who has laboured yet is fit for his labour, as with a final burst of speed he leaped down the slope, and catching the horns crushed the forehead of the deer with his stone axe, and it dropped with a loud groan. Another blow, and the creature, breathing a deep sigh of final effort, passed out of life at the water's edge. The youth, all shining with perspiration, his hair fallen from its fastenings, his face flushed, his chest heaving for breath, and his eyes brilliant with triumphant excitement, faced the multitude, waved his axe, and uttered the piercing "Ko-weh" of victory. *Man had outrun deer.* Not only had he outrun him, but by a refinement of skill, had compelled him to end his career at a given spot!

Nor had game ever any audience more able to appreciate and enjoy it. The Algonkins, it is true, regretted that their champion had

not won this year's contest, but as they had been victorious at several previous meetings, they were willing to give way to the admiration of the moment; on the other hand, the Hochelagan youths and boys screamed and screamed their congratulations; their women wept with joy, and waded into the water to take charge of the stag. Hiawatha's mother, Onata, sat, bright-eyed, within her shawl, and Awitharoa, coming down to the waterside, invited the victor, who now sat modestly upon a boulder near his victim, to cross, and when he did so, took a red-tipped eagle feather from his own head-dress and placed it in the youth's hair to be worn all his life thereafter in feast and war. Long afterwards the Hochelagans remembered the first wearing of this feather in tragic and momentous experiences. But none of them dreamed even then that it was to affect, as it did, the history of the whole world.

The stag was speedily stripped of its hide by the women, brought over and arranged for broiling, and during the preparation of the feast the dance of peace was started under the Pine. It was only then that the Black Wolverine emerged wearily from the forest, angrily waded over to the tree, and, refusing to utter a word, sat down apart on the bank of the River of the Master, steadily following the red-tipped feather in Hiawatha's hair with a sullen fury which the Hochelagan women liked not.

RADISSON'S FIRST VOYAGE

EARLY one morning in the spring of 1652 three young men left the little stockaded fort of Three Rivers, on the north bank of the St. Lawrence, for a day's hunting in the marshes of Lake St. Peter. On one side were the forested hills, purple with mists of rising vapour and still streaked with white patches of snow where the dense woods shut out the sunlight. On the other lay the silver expanse of the St. Lawrence, more like a lake than a river, with mile on mile southwestward of rush-grown marshes, where plover and curlew and duck and wild geese flocked to their favourite feeding-grounds three hundred years ago just as they do to-day. Northeastward, the three mouths of the St. Maurice poured their spring flood into the St. Lawrence.

The hunters were very young. Only hunters rash with the courage of untried youth would have left the shelter of the fort walls when all the world knew that the Iroquois had been lying in ambush round the little settlement of Three Rivers day and night for the preceding year. Not a week passed but some settler working on the outskirts of Three Rivers was set upon and left dead in

his fields by marauding Iroquois. The tortures suffered by Jogues, the great Jesuit missionary who had been captured by the Iroquois a few years before, were still fresh in the memory of every man, woman, and child in New France. It was from Three Rivers that Piescaret, the famous Algonquin chief who could outrun a deer, had set out against the Iroquois, turning his snowshoes back to front, so that the track seemed to lead north when he was really going south, and then, having thrown his pursuers off the trail, coming back on his own footsteps, slipping up stealthily on the Iroquois that were following the false scent, and tomahawking the laggards. It was from Three Rivers that the Mohawks had captured the Algonquin girl who escaped by slipping off the thongs that bound her. Stepping over the prostrate forms of the sleeping guards, such a fury of revenge possessed her that she seized an axe and brained the nearest sleeper, then eluded her pursuers by first hiding in a hollow tree and afterward diving under the debris of a beaver dam.

These things were known to every inhabitant of Three Rivers. Farmers had flocked into the little fort and could venture back to their fields only when armed with a musket. Yet the three young hunters rashly left the shelter of the fort walls and took the very dangerous path that led between the forests and the water. One of the young men was

barely in his seventeenth year. This was Pierre Esprit Radisson, from St. Malo, the town of the famous Cartier. Young Radisson had only come to New France the year before, and therefore could not realize the dangers of Indian warfare. Like boys the world over, the three went along, boasting how they would fight if the Indians came. One skirted the forest, on the watch for Iroquois, the others kept to the water, on the lookout for game. About a mile from Three Rivers they encountered a herdsman who warned them to keep out from the foot of the hills. Things that looked like a multitude of heads had risen out of the earth back there, he said, pointing to the forests. That set the young hunters loading their pistols and priming muskets. It must also have chilled their zest; for, shooting some ducks, one of the young men presently declared that he had had enough—he was going back. With that daring which was to prove both the lodestar and the curse of his life, young Radisson laughed to scorn the sudden change of mind. Thereupon the first hunter was joined by the second, and the two went off in high dudgeon. With a laugh, Pierre Radisson marched along alone, foreshadowing his after life,—a type of every pathfinder facing the dangers of the unknown with dauntless scorn, an immortal type of the world-hero.

Shooting at every pace and hilarious over his luck, Radisson had wandered some nine

miles from the fort, when he came to a stream too deep to ford and realized that he already had more game than he could possibly carry. Hiding in hollow trees what he could not bring back, he began trudging toward Three Rivers with a string of geese, ducks, and odd teal over his shoulders. Wading swollen brooks and scrambling over windfalls, he retraced his way without pause till he caught sight of the town chapel glimmering in the sunlight against the darkening horizon above the river. He was almost back where his comrades had left him; so he sat down to rest. The cowherd had driven his cattle back to Three Rivers. The river came lapping through the rushes. There was a clacking of wild-fowl flocking down to their marsh nests; perhaps a crane flopped through the reeds; but Radisson, who had laughed the nervous fears of the others to scorn, suddenly gave a start at the lonely sounds of the night. Then he noticed that his pistols were water-soaked. Emptying the charges, he at once reloaded, and with characteristic daring crept softly back to reconnoitre the woods. Dodging from tree to tree, he peered up and down the river. Great flocks of ducks were swimming on the water. That reassured him, for the bird is more alert to alarm than man. The fort was almost within call. Radisson determined to have a shot at such easy quarry; but as he crept through the grass toward the game, he almost stumbled

over what rooted him to the spot with horror. Just as they had fallen, naked and scalped, with bullet and hatchet wounds all over their bodies, lay his comrades of the morning, dead among the rushes. Radisson was too far out to get back to the woods. Stooping, he tried to grope to the hiding of the bushes. As he bent, half a hundred heads rose from the grasses, peering which way he might go. They were behind, before, on all sides—his only hope was a dash for the cane-grown river, where he might hide by diving and wading, till darkness gave a chance for a rush to the fort. Slipping bullet and shot in his musket as he ran, and ramming down the paper, hoping against hope that he had not been seen, he dashed through the brushwood. A score of guns crashed from the forest. Before he realized the penalty that the Iroquois might exact for such an act, he had fired back; but they were upon him. He was thrown down and disarmed. When he came giddily to his senses, he found himself being dragged back to the woods, where the Iroquois flaunted the fresh scalps of his dead friends. Half drawn, half driven, he was taken to the shore. Here, a flotilla of canoes lay concealed where he had been hunting wild-fowl but a few hours before. Fires were kindled, and the crotched sticks driven in the ground to boil the kettle for the evening meal. The young Frenchman was searched, stripped, and tied round the waist with a rope,

the Indians yelling and howling like so many wolves all the while till a pause was given their jubilation by the alarm of a scout that the French and Algonquins were coming. In a trice, the fire was out and covered. A score of young braves set off to reconnoitre. Fifty remained at the boats; but if Radisson hoped for a rescue, he was doomed to disappointment. The warriors returned. Seventy Iroquois gathered round a second fire for the night. The one predominating passion of the savage nature is bravery. Lying in ambush, they had heard this French youth laugh at his comrades' fears. In defiance of danger, they had seen him go hunting alone. After he had heard an alarm, he had daringly come out to shoot at the ducks. And, then, boy as he was, when attacked he had instantly fired back at numerous enough enemies to have intimidated a score of grown men. There is not the slightest doubt it was Radisson's bravery that now saved him from the fate of his companions.

His clothes were returned. While the evening meal was boiling, young warriors dressed and combed the Frenchman's hair after the manner of braves. They daubed his cheeks with war-paint; and when they saw that their rancid meats turned him faint, they boiled meat in clean water and gave him meal browned on burning sand. He did not struggle to escape, so he was now untied. That night he slept between two warriors under

a common blanket, through which he counted the stars. For fifty years his home was to be under the stars. It is typically Radisson when he could add: "I slept a sound sleep; for they wakened me upon the breaking of the day." In the morning they embarked in thirty-seven canoes, two Indians in each boat, with Radisson tied to the cross-bar of one, the scalps lying at his feet. Spreading out on the river, they beat their paddles on the gunwales of the canoes, shot off guns, and uttered the shrill war-cry—"Ah-oh! Ah-oh! Ah-oh!" Lest this were not sufficient defiance to the penned-up fort on the river bank, the chief stood up in his canoe, signalled silence, and gave three shouts. At once the whole company answered till the hills rang; and out swung the fleet of canoes with more shouting and singing and firing of guns, each paddle-stroke sounding the death knell to the young Frenchman's hopes.

By sunset they were among the islands at the mouth of the Richelieu, where muskrats scuttled through the rushes and wild-fowl clouded the air. The south shore of Lake St. Peter was heavily forested; the north, shallow. The lake was flooded with spring thaw, and the Mohawks could scarcely find camping-ground among the islands. The young prisoner was deathly sick from the rank food that he had eaten and heart-sick fom the widening distance between himself and Three Rivers. Still, they treated him kindly, say-

ing, "Chagon! Chagon!—Be merry! Cheer up!" The fourth day up the Richelieu, he was embarked without being fastened to the cross-bar, and he was given a paddle. Fresh to the work, Radisson made a labour of his oar. The Iroquois took the paddle and taught him how to give the light, deft, feather strokes of the Indian canoeman. On the river they met another band of warriors, and the prisoner was compelled to show himself a trophy of victory and to sing songs for his captors. That evening the united bands kindled an enormous camp-fire and with the scalps of the dead flaunting from spear heads danced the scalp dance, re-enacting in pantomime all the episodes of the massacre to the monotonous chant-chant of a recitative relating to the foray. At the next camping-ground, Radisson's hair was shaved in front and decorated on top with the war-crest of a brave. Having translated the white man into a savage, they brought him one of the tin looking-glasses used by Indians to signal in the sun. "I, viewing myself all in a pickle," relates Radisson, "smeared with red and black, covered with such a top . . . could not but fall in love with myself, if I had not had better instructions to shun the sin of pride."

Radisson saw that apparent compliance with the Mohawks might win him a chance to escape; so he was the first to arise in the morning, wakening the others and urging them that it was time to break camp. The

stolid Indians were not to be moved by an audacious white boy. Watching the young prisoner the keepers lay still, feigning sleep. Radisson rose. They made no protest. He wandered casually down to the water side. One can guess that the half-closed eyelids of his guards opened a trifle: was the mouse trying to get away from the cat? To the Indians' amusement, instead of trying to escape, Radisson picked up a spear and practised tossing it, till a Mohawk became so interested that he jumped up and taught the young Frenchman the proper throws. That day the Indians gave him the present of a hunting-knife. North of Lake Champlain, the river became so turbulent that they were forced to land and make a *portage*. Instead of lagging, as captives frequently did from very fear as they approached nearer and nearer what was almost certain to mean death-torture in the Iroquois villages—Radisson hurried over the rocks, helping the older warriors to carry their packs. At night he was the first to cut wood for the camp fire.

About a week from the time they had left Lake St. Peter, they entered Lake Champlain. On the shores of the former had been enacted the most hideous of all Indian customs—the scalp dance. On the shores of the latter was performed one of the most redeeming rites of Indian warfare. Round a small pool of water a coppice of branches was in-

terlaced. Into the water were thrown hot stones till the enclosure was steaming. Here each warrior took a sweat-bath of purification to prepare for reunion with his family. Invoking the spirits as they bathed, the warriors emerged washed—as they thought—of all blood-guilt.

In the night shots sounded through the heavy silence of the forest, and the Mohawks embarked in alarm, compelling their white prisoner to lie flat in the bottom of the canoe. In the morning when he awakened, he found the entire band hidden among the rushes of the lake. They spent several days on Lake Champlain, then glided past wooded mountains down a calm river to Lake George, where canoes were abandoned and the warriors struck westward through dense forests to the country of the Iroquois. Two days from the lake slave women met the returning braves, and in Radisson's words, "loaded themselves like mules with baggage." On this woodland march Radisson won golden opinions for himself by two acts: struck by an insolent young brave, he thrashed the culprit soundly; seeing an old man staggering under too heavy a load, the white youth took the burden on his own shoulders.

The return of the warriors to their villages was always celebrated as a triumph. The tribe marched out to meet them, singing, firing guns, shouting a welcome, dancing as the Israelites danced of old when victors return-

ed from battle. Men, women, and children lined up on each side armed with clubs and whips to scourge the captives. Well for Radisson that he had won the warriors' favour; for when the time came for him to run the gauntlet of Iroquois *diableries,* instead of being slowly led, with trussed arms and shackled feet, he was stripped free and signalled to run so fast that his tormentors could not hit him. Shrieks of laughter from the women, shouts of applause from the men, always greeted the racer who reached the end of the line unscathed. A captive Huron woman, who had been adopted by the tribe, caught the white boy as he dashed free of a single blow clear through the lines of tormentors. Leading him to her cabin, she fed and clothed him. Presently a band of braves marched up, demanded the surrender of Radisson, and took him to the Council Lodge of the Iroquois for judgment.

Old men sat solemnly round a central fire, smoking their calumets in silence. Radisson was ordered to sit down. A coal of fire was put in the bowl of the great Council Pipe and passed reverently round the assemblage. Then the old Huron woman entered, gesticulating and pleading for the youth's life. The men smoked on silently with deep, guttural "ho-ho's" meaning, "yes, yes, we are pleased." The woman was granted permission to adopt Radisson as a son. Radisson had won his end. Diplomacy and courage had

saved his life. It now remained to await an opportunity for escape.

Radisson bent all his energies to become a great hunter. He was given firearms, and daily hunted with the family of his adoption. It so happened that the family had lost a son in the wars, whose name had signified the same as Radisson's—that is, "a stone"; so the Pierre of Three Rivers became the Orimha of the Mohawks. The Iroquois husband of the woman who had befriended him gave such a feast to the Mohawk braves as befitted the prestige of a warrior who had slain nineteen enemies with his own hand. Three hundred young Mohawks sat down to a collation of moose nose and beaver tails and bears' paws, served by slaves. To this banquet Radisson was led, decked out in coloured blankets with garnished leggings and such a wealth of wampum strings hanging from wrists, neck, hair, and waist that he could scarcely walk. Wampum means more to the Indian than money to the white man. It represents not only wealth but social standing, and its value may be compared to the white man's estimate of pink pearls. Diamond-cutters seldom spend more than two weeks in polishing a good stone. An Indian would spend thirty days in perfecting a single bit of shell into fine wampum. Radisson's friends had ornamented him for the feast in order to win the respect of the Mohawks for the French boy. Striking his hatchet through

a kettle of sagamite to signify thus would he break peace to all Radisson's foes, the old Iroquois warrior made a speech to the assembled guests. The guests clapped their hands and shouted, "Chagon, Orimha!—Be merry, Pierre!" The Frenchman had been formally adopted as a Mohawk.

THE WINNING OF MARIE-LOUISE

THERE is, not many miles above the High Falls on the Rivière des Lièvres, a level plateau from which the hills seem to have withdrawn to leave an area for some spectacle, some ancient, savage pageant. Here, in days before the white man, trooped the Indians, Algonquins and Ottawas; streaming through the rift in the mountains from the east towards Timiscamingue, or coming up the river in canoes like a cloud of dragon-flies from the wilderness of the south, pitching their tepees at sundown and trading there for weeks in the yellow sunlight, while the river flooded by and the hills kept watch around. Here, now, lies the Iroquois farm, and a little farther Notre Dame de Low, and beyond that the loneliness of Lac des Sables, and beyond that again the river in its sources, fed by the north snows melting until midsummer.

At the Iroquois Farm lived Monique Bellefontaine, and this is the story of how Marie-Louise Bellefontaine won her husband and is Madame Pierre Voyer at this date. Monique's house stood back from the river, where he had built it with his own hands, and it was a famous house from Buckingham to Lac des Sables. People who knew not the

house had heard of the fame of Monique, for he was a mighty man in those parts, and was renowned for fiddle-playing and dancing and hewing and fighting. In his young days no one could beat him at shooting with a rifle; no man had ever knocked him off his legs. He could follow a trail in the woods like a hound, and could make a canoe like an Indian, and had been known to walk over a hundred and fifty miles on snowshoes without eating, resting or sleeping. And when his fame was becoming a trifle dim by reason of age, his daughter, Marie-Louise, revived the tradition of the house, and became the noted beauty, as he in his day had been the noted bravo, of the river. In the winter-time many a teamster stopped his horses and wended his way to Monique's, for no reason at all but to renew an impression of Marie-Louise's laughing eyes. And in the summer, when the "drive" came down the river, the longest stage they had was the ten miles above and below Monique's.

There is something fateful in being a beauty and having a mighty man for a father, for amid all Marie-Louise's lovers was not one who had the courage to walk up to the hero and demand her hand. It had become noised abroad that the man who had that courage would have to prove his right by a series of hand-to-hand encounters with Monique, and there were traditions of fights in which he had broken jawbones and cracked

brain-pans, and of milder meetings in which he had danced every adversary off his legs, and played the fiddle until only one hair was left in the bow. For modest men, these recollections of their fathers were deterrents; and as time went by it became clear that the strength and prowess of her father's hands were to rise up against Marie-Louise and be the blame of her maiden days.

But even such destinies are altered by circumstances from without, and it was the advent of Pierre Voyer, from some region beyond the Lièvres and its environs, which gave Marie-Louise joy. In October of a certain year she was looking from her window upon the river. It was toward evening. From the dusk of the point where the water turned she could hear faint singing, and the hard, short blow of the oars in the rowlocks. Soon the boats rounded the point; one, two, three. Twenty men in each boat, pulling altogether, they sang:

> Descendez à l'ombre,
> Ma jolie blonde.

They made gay colour in the boats with their bright shirts and their red caps and blue tunics. Each brilliant group doubled itself in the still water. Madame Bellefontaine was adding the last loaves to a cord of bread which she made in two days. "Here they come," she cried. Monique sauntered down

to the landing. Soon the song began to die off, and individual voices came out in halloos, and laughter rang clear. Some one threw a dog from a leading boat, and he swam on in front yelping with excitement. This was the arrival of the first gang of men for the upper river; and on this evening, for the first time, Marie-Louise saw Pierre Voyer. He was not very tall, but taller than he looked. Dark hair he had, and blue, resolute eyes. That evening he had a red handkerchief tied about his hair, and blue leggings, and looked a bit of a dandy in his high-heeled shoes. An earring he wore in his left ear, and his right arm was tattooed with a figure of a heart with a dove fluttering over it. There was a bold, free look about him as he strode around the open fires where the cooks were making the supper. When he stood still he was like a young pine in a clearance of the forest.

Old Monique took a fancy to him, and asked him his name, and swung his hand and hit him two or three blows in the chest to see if he was as sound as he looked. He was; so Monique brought the handsome fellow up to the house and said, "Here, old woman, Madame Bellefontaine, here's a young fellow called Voyer from away beyond. This is Marie-Louise." So down they sat and had supper, and it was found the young fellow had a tongue in his head. Oh! he made them laugh. Then he told a story about a friend

of his, and every one knew that it was a story about himself. Old Monique slapped his hand on his thigh and cried out, "Just like me when I was a lad!" And then he felt sorry that he had so flattered the young fellow. All the while, as Pierre Voyer talked, his eyes kept up a conversation with Marie-Louise, until old Monique, who was as sharp as a weasel, felt that there was something in the wind, and broke up the party *sans ceremonie*.

On the edge of the river the men had set up their tents, and there was a hubbub of fiddles and songs, disputes and loud laughter. The scene was illuminated by the smoking fires, and here and there a glaring birch-bark torch. Presently the men had wrangled themselves to sleep, and, as Marie-Louise looked from her window, the only sound she heard was the strong current of the river; the dark tents she saw rising upon the bank, and now and again roving sparks started out in little golden companies from the half-dead fires. Across the river, moving ever in a faint light of its own, she saw the black mountains behind which fell the stars. Marie-Louise wondered if down there under one of the tents merry Pierre was planning to dare Monique and marry her.

In the morning on the way they went, bound for the pineries at the head-waters of the Lièvres; and Monique Bellefontaine, who was foreman of the gang, went with them. Marie-Louise remained at home to

watch the river freeze over and the snow sift in behind the trees on the mountain, and to remember Pierre Voyer, whose memory she adored, even to the earring in his ear.

It was not until near the middle of the winter that Pierre Voyer mentioned Marie-Louise Bellefontaine's name to any one, but he had thought of it many, many times. He had heard talk around the caboose, and at noon in the still, snowy pine woods when they stopped work for lunch, that the man who married Marie-Louise must be a better man than her father. He had taken time to measure her father. Occasionally he would take an axe, just to show the boys how to chop a tree; casually he would leap two feet farther than the best jumper in the camp; with an instructive air he would somtimes take a fiddle in hand and play a tune in the second position. Pierre Voyer had taken note of these things.

One day Monique Bellefontaine and Pierre Voyer slipped on their snowshoes, took each a wedge of bread and three square inches of pork, each an axe, and started. The foreman wanted to look at a new area of pine, and he chose to take Pierre Voyer because—well, because, for a youngster, he had less ignorance about pine than any one Monique had met. They walked fifteen miles, and began to get into the new region. They did not talk much—Monique was estimating the trees on one side, Pierre on the other. They spoke

little on matters foreign to their speculation; about them was the great silence of the wood.

They rested for lunch on the border of a lake. It looked like a cleared plain in the centre of the forest. The level snow was fretted all across in ripples, delicate in blue shadows and crystal curves. A chickadee came down and chirped about as they sat munching in the cold. Pierre Voyer thought that was a good time to speak, so he stood up as formally as he could, and, as if making an announcement, he said: "My name is Pierre Voyer. I come from Sagamook; my father has the big farm there; I want to marry Marie-Louise Bellefontaine."

His heart thumped his ribs like a woodpecker trying a hollow tree. All his instinct told him, by the way Monique kept silence and seemed to look at the chickadee, that his work was before him. By and by Monique spoke. "Very well, we shall see. Pierre Voyer has got to be a pretty good man to marry Marie-Louise." He did not propose any trial of strength like the ancient heroes, but went on with his work. Pierre was expectant. The afternoon began to wear away, and long after the time when they should have started for the shanty, Monique was staring at the pine-trees. Suddenly he straightened himself, threw his axe over his shoulder, and broke into a trot. Pierre gave a tug at his belt and followed. Close he kept at Monique's heels. He went for a mile or two at that rate,

and then began a long, moose-like stride, rapid and powerful, that seemed to lift him over the snow. Pierre laboured after him, seeing the wide space between them gradually widen. Then Monique stopped to fix his shoe, and Pierre overtook him. But in a moment he was flying on ahead, snow dancing about his heels.

Unexpectedly they came to drop over a brow of rock. Monique leaped down ten feet and lit like a bird, and on he went. Pierre hesitated a moment, thumped down clumsily sideways, slid two feet and came to a dead stand, his shoes weighted with a mass of snow. On went the terrible Monique, up a hill, never once looking behind. They had gone for five miles, when Pierre began to lose sight of him. He had a stabbing stitch in his side; his breath seemed all in his throat. Then he began to think that Monique was a tree moving, and then that the tree was Monique standing still; and then he lost him hopelessly.

He kept on in a vexed, blind, maddened way until his lungs became like stone. When he had rested awhile, he took up the trail and followed those tremendous strides to the shanty. Supper was well over. Monique reclined in his bunk, and never glanced toward the door when Pierre came in. He felt that throughout the company, from the cook to the culler, the rumour had spread that some

one had asked for the hand of Marie-Louise Bellefontaine.

It took Pierre ten days to swallow the chagrin of that defeat. When one night Monique nodded to him as he passed through the door, Pierre followed him like a man who obeys a dictator. The moon stood straight overhead. Monique walked along the hard snow road for a mile, and when he turned and said to Pierre: "You and me are going to wrestle."

At it they went in the moonlight that flooded the snow and chased it with the shadows of the hardwood trees. First it was catch-as-catch-can. Pierre got the best hold, and heaved at Monique as if he were lifting a ton. He seemed rooted in granite like a mountain. They crouched almost immovable; a mass of iron muscle on the strain. Pierre, through his starting eyes, saw their shadows thrown on the snow in a strange dwarfed shape.

Suddenly he felt as if some weight were crushing him. He strove against it terribly. One foot was forced out of the snow. All the blood of his body seemed in his eyes. Then he went up very slowly into the air; all his grasp was broken away, and in a moment more he flew over Monique's head and lay in the road. The moon looked down on him.

They tried collar and elbow. Pierre was a valiant lad, and he was fighting for Marie-Louise. Monique's arms were like bars of iron. Pierre could not move him. Then Monique began to play him back and forth and

give him sudden jerks that made his head feel as if it would be snapped off. Then he slowly turned him over on his side as if he were a tired child and let him rest in the snow.

Pierre's sensations gave him matter for thought for weeks. Spring was coming on, and if he had been fortunate in his encounters he might have looked forward to meeting Marie-Louise with confidence. There was one test left. He could play the fiddle; yes, he was aware that he could play the fiddle. He did not believe that Monique could equal him in that, which was surely why he had never accepted the challenge, as Pierre had often played before him. One night, just before they began to drive the logs in to the Lièvres, Pierre took his fiddle and played as he had never played before. Such fire, such tone, such extraordinary sweeps and gyrations of the bow! Could anything surpass that? he thought.

By and by, some time after he had ceased, amid the chatter and laughter of the camp arose a penetrating sound which made the silence fall as stars come out after rain. Low and firm and equal, note followed note; flowing strongly, slowly, earnestly, note followed note. What was the melody he played? No one there had heard it before, and still each man seemed to recognize it. It grew up like a flower in the ferny spaces of deep woods. It gathered depth as the night does, star following star. It ceased as the dawn comes with

quiet colour. A few deep notes and it was done. Pierre covered up his head in silence.

When the drive reached Bellefontaine's place, Marie-Louise heard all about these adventures from her cousin Ulric, who was in the camp, and her heart burned for Pierre. He would not come near the house, as he had no right to; and he sulked in his tent. Marie-Louise remembered him just as he looked the night he came up the river with his earring in his ear, his black locks bound with the red handkerchief. She longed to see him again and crown him for his valiancy. But Monique stood between them, and she did a better thing. She wrote him a note, which was borne to him by the cousin. Pierre Voyer read it by the waning light the same evening. It bore these magic words: "Dad kant swim.—Marie Louise."

Pierre studied these words. What did they mean? Suddenly light broke in upon his dark mind. He knew that Marie-Louise loved him; and that if she had her will his labours would be closed; that she had heard of his defeats and honoured them. For, what did she say? "Dad kant swim." He put the scrap of paper over his heart. Monique, like Achilles and many another hero, had one vulnerable point. His daughter had betrayed it.

A week after this Bellefontaine was as quiet as before, and the drive had reached the High Falls. Here the river takes a sharp turn and rolls all its brown water over two

preliminary cascades, and then down one tremendous leap of a hundred feet. Every log that slips the boom and goes over the fall is marred or broken. Every log that goes down the prepared chute glides like an arrow, swift as light, and drops uninjured into the pool. This chute begins in the placid water at the head of the first cascade. It is a V-shaped trough supported on trestles, six feet wide at the top, three feet at the bottom; it is about four feet deep. It slopes and bends down among the trees for four hundred yards. The timbers which form it are bleached clean as bones by the sun and the rain. Through this trough spins constantly a solid stream of rapid water.

Until they reached the Falls Pierre had no opportunity of using his newly acquired knowledge. But one day as he stood in the sunshine at the head of the chute guiding the logs into the current an idea came into his head. He looked down the chute and followed the hurrying logs and water with his eyes. He had heard of men going down there, some alive, some who were merely names forever after. He weighed the chances, and he remembered Marie-Louise and his lost battles for her in the woods. He knew he could swim. Monique was working very near him, directing operations from a stout timber which bridged the chute. Gradually, without attracting attention, Pierre drew closer to

him, closer to him. He waited his opportunity. It came. Monique turned to call something down the chute; he had one foot off the timber and was raising it on the other. Quick as a flash, Pierre slipped his pike-pole under that foot and pried it up. Without knowing what had happened, Monique found himself in the terrific water. All the men saw, after they heard him yell, was a flash of red at the turn. He was gone. Before any one could move Pierre had plunged into the stream and was gone, head first, out of sight.

He could not realize the speed at which he was rushing. The two iron bars let into the sides of the chute, polished like silver, looked like ribbons spinning by. There were flashes and yells as he shot past the point where the men were stationed. He saw the calm blue sky far, far above him. And in an instant he felt the deep waters cover him. He fought with them, and came into the light again, swimming strongly. He was in a whirlpool, and just beyond him he saw Monique's face, whiter than the white foam. It disappeared. Pierre struck out desperately. Then he found Monique under his hands; he grasped him. They were locked together, and for a moment Pierre held him by the throat and spoke to him and shook him.

Then Monique gave himself up in fear, and Pierre battled for their lives. Slowly, with enormous power, he edged out of the

whirlpool, and felt the sucking of the cross-current that set out of the bay around the point. Beyond that point lay the rapids, short but fierce and dangerous. He struggled to gain that point, but swiftly it turned and flew by.

Then in the mighty pull of the current he floated and saved his strength. Monique lay back, his eyes closed, his mouth catching the water. Up came the roar, the clamour from the rapids, louder and louder. Suddenly Pierre grasped Monique around the body, his arms like the grip of a vise, and they went into the waters that seemed to hurl them on and crowd upon them for their lives. It was only a minute of confusion, without breath, without sight, without heart-beats. They were covered and overwhelmed. The water forced them until the sinews of Pierre's arms cracked with the strain; together they rolled into the deep quiet eddy at the foot of the last plunge. Together and alive!

When Monique wrung the water out of his eyes he saw Pierre standing on the shore. He knew Pierre's arm was broken by the way it hung. "I'm all right," he was saying, with the blood trickling out of the roots of his hair from a wound concealed by it.

A few minutes later Monique was yelling to his gang, "Look alive, you fellows! Do you think I keep you to look like sheep in a thunder-storm? Get a canoe and paddle to

Notre Dame de Low and bring back Dr. Roisblanc. And you, Ulric," he called to his nephew, "go up to the house and bring Marie-Louise down, if she wants to come. Tell her there's a man down here that knows how to swim, and his name is Pierre Voyer."

Marie-Louise came.

EXPIATION

I

ABOVE the level ground upon which the buildings of the Missanabie Post are erected there rises a point of rock looking westward over the lake. At its foot lies a pool of water, black from its great depth, covered sometimes with gleams of dead colour from glorious sunsets, and sometimes with the fragile streaks of dawn that fly timidly through the mists.

From this point of rock an observer can see the lake to its farthest shores, can note the contour of its islands, and can hear the dulcet sound of all its small waves ringing like the tones of innumerable lute-players sounding their fairy music. The peculiarity of this place is its aloofness; for with the wide expanse before and the clear depth of the water below, it seems far removed from the mean huddle of buildings which is the metropolis of those silent environs of forest. Yet it is distant but the cast of a stone, and from the stockade any person may be seen upon the observation point, standing or sitting.

The sight of a figure there during the last ten years had become so common that it at-

tracted no attention from Indians or half-breeds, habitués of the post. It seemed part of the landscape, a continuation of the rock itself, rather than a human figure outlined against the sky. But no mass of rocks could express the strength of human feeling as that form expressed it. Something deeper than any simple emotion seemed to emanate from the man's figure.

Hardly any one noticed when he went there or when he came away. Sometimes a trader from beyond, some one who had heard of the man in his days of power, would stroll by in vulgar curiosity, thinking to hail him. The stranger had, perchance, just bought tobacco of him in the store; why should he not converse with him in the open air? But the inquisitive one passed by without a word. The figure sat there with an inscrutable air, unconsciously expressing itself with such intensity that none dared profane the sacredness of such silence. The mere elements of clothing which he wore, encompassing him, ample and rude, seemed to radiate the feeling, but particularly the fillet formed of three mink-skins, roughly sewn together, which he ever wore about his brow.

Forbes Macrimmon had been the chief trader at Missanabie, and a mighty man. The post was in the centre of a valuable hunting-ground, and three hundred Indians traded there. All went well until opposition came. There are some men who are re-

sourceful only in adversity; there are others in whom rivalry breeds irritation and develops incompetency. Macrimmon was of the latter class. When Pierre Loudet, of the French Company—this was in the year 1808—appeared before his fort, laid peaceful siege to it, and endeavoured to undermine its trade, he was at his wits' end. Forbes was a Highlandman, proud of everything that went to make up the individual Macrimmon—his strength, his stature, his shrewdness in a trade, his ancestry, his power of drinking much rum, his quick temper, his politeness. His pride led him to say many foolish things.

"I'm not afraid of man, God, or devil," he would say. "Nothing touches me, love nor hate nor greed, and I can give up the thing that most men cherish as an Indian gives up an old pack-strap. I never sucked a drop of my mother's milk, and neither woman nor man has any control over me."

Thus he philosophised, knowing not at all what manner of man he was; but when the time was ripe God taught him.

Pierre Loudet was polished as a dancing-floor, but was any man to best a Macrimmon in politeness? They exchanged visits, drank quarts of each other's rum, and fought each other for the trade. The contest made Macrimmon anxious, irritable, and despondent, and he imagined that he was losing ground.

His chief hope lay in his servant, Daniel Wascowin. Daniel was almost a pure Indian,

but there was a little white blood in him. He was a great hunter, who always took thrice as many skins as any one else, and his prowess gave him a position of control over the other Indians. As long as the Scotsman was sure of Daniel, the balance of trade was certain to be in his favour; and Daniel was firm in his allegiance. He thought that Macrimmon was the greatest of all earthly powers. His knowledge of heavenly powers was but dim and fitful, and of other earthly powers he knew nothing. Macrimmon might be a hard master, sudden, fierce, and inexplicable; but he was to be obeyed, he could do no wrong.

Loudet tried to corrupt Daniel, but he might as well have tried to gain an hour of May sunlight on a December day. He saw that until the power of Macrimmon's faithful henchman was humbled he would have no great success in trade at Missanabie.

Pierre Loudet was a cunning fellow. One evening, when Macrimmon had accepted his hospitality, and they were deep in the French Company's rum, he noticed on the table a little tin pail with a copper bottom, such as the Indians use to make a drawing of tea. Now, he knew that his rival had none of these pails to sell, but an inferior sort, and that those with the copper bottoms were much esteemed by the Indians. As soon as Loudet saw that his guest's eye had caught the pail he began to praise Daniel.

"A fine fellow, that Wascowin!"

"Yes, as faithful as a dog," answered Macrimmon.

"Yes, he is a faithful fellow," said Loudet with an odd inflection, and saying the word, he poured a little water from the pail on the table.

"You have an odd way of speaking, Mr. Loudet," said Macrimmon, angry in a moment.

"Oh, no offence intended," said the Frenchman smoothly. "I was just saying your man was a good man—a very faithful man." But he gave his words such a sing-song that Macrimmon did not like the tune.

"I wouldn't stand that from any man whose rum I was not drinking!" cried the trader, dashing down his pannikin, and with that he flared up and walked out of the house in a mighty rage.

The Frenchman had done a very simple thing, but it was full subtle. The fact of his having one of the Hudson's Bay Company's pails, and his peculiar look or accent in praising the faithful Daniel, worked down through Macrimmon's spirit like a drop of acid on a wound.

Next day the trader was very quiet, and very terrible in his quiet. He was watching an opportunity to prove his servant. Too proud, too irritable—in other words, too weak—to be patient, the slightest indication of guilt would serve his purpose. When his

passion broke loose he promised himself that he would give them all a fine lesson. Toward evening, when he and Daniel Wascowin were alone in the store, he suddenly roared out:

"What have ye been doing with all the tea-pails?"

The question was so loud and violent that Daniel started. He looked up to where the pails hung, near the ceiling.

"They're not all there," he said slowly.

"No, they're not all there!"

"I haven't been selling any!" continued Daniel, thinking out loud, and wondering who could have taken them; he hardly thought of any one having stolen them.

Macrimmon watched his servant, his eyes furious and devouring. Daniel had never seen him so angry, and he quailed before him. Macrimmon saw guilt where there was only surprise. His anger was as hasty as fire in grass. He leaped upon the Indian as a lion leaps on a gazelle, caught him by the throat, and forced him back against the wall.

"I'll give you a lesson, you red dog, you and all your red whelps. The like o' you in league with that frogeater—to steal the good tea-pails, and then to lie about it! There was the lie in your eyes." As he pressed Daniel against the wall with his left hand, he whipped out his double-barrelled pistol with the right. "Do you hear this?" he raged. "It'll be the last thing ye hear, and ye'll remember it. Get out of this quick, and when

ye come back let it be for a better reason than because ye think I can't get on without ye. There's a charge for each side of your head!"

"Bang!" went the pistol at Daniel's left ear, and the bullet crashed into the wall. "Bang!" went the pistol at his right ear, and the bullet crashed into the wall. Macrimmon drove the hot muzzle against the Indian's forehead.

"Let me set eyes on ye to-morrow, and I'll put a ball *there!*"

Dashing down the pistol, he caught Daniel and cast him through the door into the yard. The Indians, excited by the shots, came curiously forward by ones and twos. Daniel's wife, crossing the yard with a pail of water, saw him trying to get to his feet, but reeling and groping, as if he were stricken with a mastering illness. Blood ran from his ears; his face was scorched and blackened by flame and powder. Dropping her pail with a cry, she half carried, half led him away to his wigwam.

A little later, when the evening mist had begun to gather in the long reeds by the shore, a canoe crept through it, gliding in silence, an intensified shadow within the shadow. Then nothing was there but a ripple in the water under the mist.

The bark had been stripped from Daniel's wigwam; the stars looked through the poles. He was obedient. He had departed.

II

From that time forward things went very badly with Macrimmon. His anger had disappeared, though suspicions of Daniel were still in his thoughts; but Daniel was gone, and a calmer state of mind would not serve to bring him back. Without Daniel he was nothing. There had been no one else to trust, and now he must do everything, watch everybody, be everywhere himself. It was an impossible task, and he saw Pierre Loudet profit by his confusion. The continued politeness of the Frenchman maddened him, and he wore down his spirit in the effort to carry himself as urbanely and jauntily as his triumphant opponent.

Without Daniel's restraining influence, the Indians became impudent, ran about, traded where they pleased. In the autumn some of the best hunters took their credits from the French Company; in the following spring Loudet got the best of the furs, and many Indians did not even attempt to repay the advances Macrimmon had given them. The Scotsman's defeat was thorough. His fur-packs were so light that, in shame, he shirked taking them down to the district headquarters himself, and sent them with a crew of Indians. These careless fellows upset one canoe in a rapid; one of them was drowned and part of the load lost.

Unnumbered times Macrimmon wished for Daniel Wascowin, but he had disappeared. The Indians reported that he had deserted his old hunting-grounds. There was a vague rumour that he had been seen somewhere in the far north, but it was only a rumour.

During that spring and summer Macrimmon formed the habit of standing or sitting on the top of the rock and looking forth over the lake. He had learned much about himself, and was deeply conning the lesson. He was like one doomed, expecting some final change, the close of a chapter in his life. The end came when the trading canoes returned. A man had been sent to supersede him at the post; he had been degraded; he was to act as clerk and helper. The fact that his master was an Englishman named Gooderich was the annihilation of his pride.

This Gooderich was a bright, bustling little fellow, and he soon controlled the Indians. By the second spring he had won back so much of the trade that Pierre Loudet thought it best to travel farther westward. When Loudet was gone the truth came out.

"What an ass you were, Macrimmon," Goderich said one day, "to let this Frenchman deceive you! One of the half-breeds told me just now that Loudet put him up to steal the tea pails; you must have been drunk!"

"Yes, I was drunk," said Macrimmon quietly.

Through long brooding over his humiliation he came to the knowledge that he had been drunk with pride and arrogance. The intimation that Daniel was innocent fell upon his new mood like a stroke of lightning. His injustice, his violence, rose up against him. He would have recompensed his faithful servant a thousandfold had it been possible.

III

One evening in May an Indian came into the store and said quietly to Macrimmon:

"Daniel Wascowin has come back."

Gooderich had gone off for the day, and Macrimmon was alone. He gazed at the Indian in a dazed way and walked to the door. But a flash of his old pride sprang up in him.

"Tell him to bring his furs to the store," he said gruffly.

When the messenger had gone, Macrimmon paced to and fro excitedly. Daniel had returned—yes, he had come home. He thought of his servant just as he had been, strong and alert, striding up with a huge bundle of furs on his back, as he had often seen him in the old days when he used to pour out a tot of rum for him and shake his hand.

But Wascowin did not come. Impatient of the delay, Macrimmon went to meet him,

forgetful of the last stirring of his pride. Just outside the door he met a woman whom he did not recognize at first. She was gaunt, and her eyes glittered with a famished lustre. The skin was drawn tightly over the bones of her face, and she had no expression except the fixed one of weary hunger. It was Daniel's wife. In her hands she held three mink-skins.

"What's the matter with you?" he cried, fearful of what the figure might portend.

"You sent for Daniel's furs. I am his wife. I have brought them myself."

She held out the three pitiful mink-skins. In days gone by there had been many prime skins of otter and beaver and mink and marten, and of silver fox not a few. She held out three mink-skins!

Macrimmon saw the whole history of three years in those skins. He trembled. He set his teeth.

"Where is Daniel?" he said hoarsely.

She pointed toward the boat-landing.

Daniel had crawled out of his canoe, and lay at the landing-place, unable to move. There was just a spark of spirit left in his body of bone and skin. He tried to smile as Macrimmon bent over him. On his forehead he saw the mark he had put there—the two crescents made by the hot pistol-barrels, blackened by powder as if tattooed.

Yielding up at that moment everything of self there was in him, Macrimmon lifted the

Indian in his arms, carried him to the house, and put him in his own bed. Daniel had no strength to tell him that it was impossible to hunt when in one ear there is silence, and in the other a roaring like the rapids on the Missanabie, which the trappers call Hell's Gate. Moreover, no man can hunt with a broken spirit. He was obedient to the last; he came back for a good reason.

In the dead of the night, when they were alone, Macrimmon cried out in the anguish of his soul, and told of his grievous downfall. But Daniel could not hear a word; that was the bitterness of it. He only knew the great honour of lying in that bed; he ventured and put his hand on the white man's arm. That touch, and his confession, purged Macrimmon's spirit. He was not the man he had been. There was a peculiar strength grown up in him, but not the fatal strength of pride.

In the morning light the two men could only look helplessly into each other's eyes; and in a little while two of the eyes were darkened.

Macrimmon tanned the three mink-skins, which seemed to him symbols of the grievous wrong that he had cast upon his servant, and of his own degradation. Roughly he sewed them together; and he wore them ever after like a fillet bound about his brow.

THE PATROL OF THE CYPRESS HILLS

"HE's too ha'sh," said old Alexander Windsor, as he shut the creaking door of the store after a vanishing figure, and turned to the big iron stove with outstretched hands; hands that were cold both summer and winter. He was of lean and frigid make.

"Sergeant Fones is too ha'sh," he repeated, as he pulled out the damper and cleared away the ashes with the iron poker.

Pretty Pierre blew a quick, straight column of cigarette smoke into the air, tilted his chair back, and said: "I do not know what you mean by 'ha'sh', but he is the devil. Eh, well, there was more than one devil made sometime in the North West." He laughed softly.

"That gives you a chance in history, Pretty Pierre," said a voice from behind a pile of woollen goods and buffalo skins in the centre of the floor. The owner of the voice then walked to the window. He scratched some frost from the pane and looked out to where the trooper in dog-skin coat, and gauntlets, and cap, was mounting his broncho. The old man came and stood near the young man,—

the owner of the voice,—and said again: "He's too ha'sh."

"*Harsh* you mean, father," added the other.

"Yes, *harsh* you mean, Old Brown Windsor,—quite harsh," said Pierre.

Alexander Windsor, storekeeper and general dealer, was sometimes called "Old Brown Windsor" and sometimes "Old Aleck," to distinguish him from his son, who was known as "Young Aleck."

As the old man walked back again to the stove to warm his hands, Young Aleck continued: "He does his duty: that's all. If he doesn't wear kid gloves while at it, it's his choice. He doesn't go beyond his duty. You can bank on that. It would be hard to exceed that way out here."

"True, Young Aleck, so true; but then he wears gloves of iron, of ice. That is not good. Sometime the glove will be too hard and cold on a man's shoulder, and then!—Well, I should like to be there," said Pierre, showing his white teeth.

Old Aleck shivered, and held his fingers where the stove was red hot.

The young man did not hear this speech; he was watching Sergeant Fones as he rode toward the Big Divide. Presently he said: "He's going toward Humphrey's place. I—" He stopped, bent his brows, caught one corner of his slight moustache between his teeth, and

did not stir a muscle until the Sergeant had passed over the Divide.

Old Aleck was meanwhile dilating upon his theme before a passive listener. But Pierre was only passive outwardly. Besides hearkening to the father's complaints he was closely watching the son. Pierre was clever, and a good actor. He had learned the power of reserve and outward immobility. The Indian in him helped him there. He had heard what Young Aleck had just muttered; but to the man of the cold fingers he said: "You keep good whisky in spite of the law and the iron glove, Old Aleck." To the young man: "And you can drink it so free, eh, Young Aleck?" The half-breed looked out from the corners of his eyes at the young man, but he did not raise the peak of his fur cap in doing so, and his glances askance were not seen.

Young Aleck had been writing something with his finger-nail on the frost of the pane, over and over again. When Pierre spoke to him thus he scratched out the word he had written, with what seemed unnecessary force. But in one corner it remained: "Mab—"

Pierre added: "That is what they say at Humphrey's ranch."

"Who says that at Humphrey's?—Pierre, you lie!" was the sharp and threatening reply. The significance of this last statement had been often attested on the prairies by the piercing emphasis of a six-chambered revolver. It was evident that Young Aleck was

in earnest. Pierre's eyes glowed in the shadow, but he idly replied:

"I do not remember who said it. Well, *mon ami,* perhaps I lie; perhaps. Sometimes we dream things, and these dreams are true. You call it a lie—*bien*! Sergeant Fones, he dreams perhaps Old Aleck sells whisky against the law to men you call whisky runners, sometimes to Indians and half-breeds—half-breeds like Pretty Pierre. That was a dream of Sergeant Fones; but you see he believes it true. It is good sport, eh? Will you not take—what is it?—a silent partner? Yes: a silent partner, Old Aleck. Pretty Pierre has spare time, a little, to make money for his friends and for himself, eh?"

When did not Pierre have time to spare? He was a gambler. Unlike the majority of half-breeds, he had a pronounced French manner, nonchalant and debonair. The Indian in him gave him coolness and nerve. His cheeks had a tinge of delicate red under their whiteness, like those of a woman. That was why he was called Pretty Pierre. The country had, however, felt a kind of weird menace in the name. It was used to snakes whose rattle gave notice of approach or signal of danger. But Pretty Pierre was like the death-adder, small and beautiful, silent and deadly. At one time he had made a secret of his trade, or thought he was doing so. In those days he was often to be seen at David Humphrey's home, and often in talk

with Mab Humphrey; but it was there one night that the man who was ha'sh gave him his true character, with much candour and no comment.

Afterwards Pierre was not seen at Humphrey's ranch. Men prophesied that he would have revenge some day on Sergeant Fones; but he did not show anything on which this opinion could be based. He took no umbrage at being called Pretty Pierre the gambler. But for all that he was possessed of a devil.

Young Aleck had inherited some money through his dead mother from his grandfather, a Hudson's Bay Factor. He had been in the East for some years, and when he came back he brought his "little pile" and an impressionable heart with him. The former Pretty Pierre and his friends set about to win; the latter, Mab Humphrey won without the trying. Yet Mab gave Young Aleck as much as he gave her. More. Because her love sprang from a simple, earnest and uncontaminated life. Her purity and affection were being played against Pierre's designs and Young Aleck's weakness. With Aleck cards and liquor went together. Pierre seldom drank.

But what of Sergeant Fones? If the man that knew him best—the Commandant—had been asked for his history, his reply would have been: "Five years in the Service, rigid disciplinarian, best non-commissioned

officer on the Patrol of the Cypress Hills." That was all the Commandant knew.

A soldier-policeman's life on the frontier is rough, solitary, and severe. Active duty and responsibility are all that makes it endurable. To few is it fascinating. A free and thoughtful nature would, however, find much in it, in spite of great hardships, to give interest and even pleasure. The sense of breadth and vastness, and the inspiration of pure air could be a very gospel of strength, beauty, and courage, to such an one—for a time. But was Sergeant Fones such an one? The Commandant's scornful reply to a question of the kind would have been: "He is the best soldier on the Patrol."

And so with hard gallops here and there after the refugees of crime or misfortune, or both, who fled before them like deer among the passes of the hills, and, like deer at bay, often fought the demons to the death; with border watchings, and protection and care and vigilance of the Indians; with hurried marches at sunrise, the thermometer at fifty degrees below zero often in winter, and open camps beneath the stars, and no camp at all, as often as not, winter and summer; with rough barrack fun and parade and drill and guard of prisoners; and with chances now and then to pay homage to a woman's face,—the Mounted Force grew full of the Spirit of the West and became brown, valiant, and hardy, with wind and weather. Perhaps some

of them longed to touch, oftener than they did, the hands of children, and to consider more the faces of women, for hearts are hearts even under a belted coat of red on the Fiftieth Parallel,—but men of nerve do not blazon their feelings.

No one would have accused Sergeant Fones of having a heart. Men of keen discernment would have seen in him the little Bismarck of the Mounted Police. His name carried farther in the Cypress Hills Patrol than any other; and yet his officers could never say that he exceeded his duty or enlarged upon the orders he received. He had no sympathy with crime. Others of the force might wink at it; but his mind appeared to sit severely upright upon the cold platform of Penalty, in beholding breaches of the Statutes. He would not have rained upon the unjust as the just if he had had the directing of the heavens. As Private Gellatly put it: "Sergeant Fones has the fear o' God in his heart, and the law of the land across his saddle, and the newest breech-loading at that!" He was part of the great machine of Order, the servant of Justice, the sentinel in the vestibule of Martial Law. His interpretation of duty worked upward as downward. Officers and privates were acted on by the force known as Sergeant Fones. Some people, like Old Brown Windsor, spoke hardly and openly of this force. There were three people who never did—Pretty Pierre,

Young Aleck, and Mab Humphrey. Pierre hated him; Young Aleck admired in him a quality lying dormant in himself—decision; Mab Humphrey spoke unkindly of no one. Besides—but no!

What was Sergeant Fone's country? No one knew. Where had he come from? No one asked him more than once. He could talk French with Pierre,—a kind of French that sometimes made the undertone of red in the Frenchman's cheeks darker. He had been heard to speak German to a German prisoner, and once, when a gang of Italians were making trouble on a line of railway under construction, he arrested the leader, and, in a few swift, sharp words in the language of the rioters, settled the business. He had no accent that betrayed his nationality.

He had been recommended for a commission. The officer in command had hinted that the Sergeant might get a Christmas present. The officer had further said: "And if it was something that both you and the Patrol would be the better for, you couldn't object, Sergeant." But the Sergeant only saluted, looking steadily into the eyes of the officer. That was his reply.

Private Gellatly, standing without, heard Sergeant Fones say, as he passed into the open air, and slowly bared his forehead to the winter sun:

"Exactly."

And Private Gellatly cried, with revolt in his voice: "Divils me own, the word that a't to have been full o' joy was like the clip of a rifle breech."

Justice in a new country is administered with promptitude and vigour, or else not administered at all. Where an officer of the Mounted Police-Soldiery has all the powers of a magistrate, the law's delay and the insolence of office has little space in which to work. One of the commonest slips of virtue in the Canadian West was selling whisky contrary to the law of prohibition which prevailed. Whisky runners were land smugglers. Old Brown Windsor had, somehow, got the reputation of being connected with the whisky runners; not a very respectable business, and thought to be dangerous. Whisky runners were inclined to resent intrusion on their privacy, with a touch of biting inhospitableness which a moon-lighter of Kentucky uses toward an inquisitive, unsympathetic marshal. On the Cypress Hills Patrol, however, the erring servants of Bacchus were having a hard time of it. Vigilance never slept there in the days of which these lines bear record. Old Brown Windsor had, in words, freely espoused the cause of the sinful. To the careless spectator it seemed a charitable siding with the suffering; a proof that the old man's heart was not so cold as his hands. Sergeant Fones thought differently, and his mission had just

been to warn the store-keeper that there was menacing evidence gathering against him, and that his friendship with Golden Feather, the Indian Chief, had better cease at once. Sergeant Fones had a way of putting things. Old Brown Windsor endeavoured for a moment to be sarcastic. This was the brief dialogue in the domain of sarcasm:

"I s'pose you just lit round in a friendly sort of way, hopin' that I'd kenoodle with you later."

"Exactly."

There was an unpleasant click to the word. The old man's hands got colder. He had nothing more to say.

Before leaving, the Sergeant said something quietly and quickly to Young Aleck. Pierre observed, but could not hear. Young Aleck was uneasy; Pierre was perplexed. The Sergeant turned at the door, and said in French: "What are your chances for a Merry Christmas at Pardon's Drive, Pretty Pierre?" Pierre said nothing. He shrugged his shoulders, and as the door closed, muttered: "*Il est le diable.*" And he meant it. What should Sergeant Fones know of that intended meeting at Pardon's Drive on Christmas Day? And if he knew, what then? It was not against the law to play euchre. Still it perplexed Pierre. Before the Windsors, father and son, however, he was, as we have seen, playfully cool.

After quitting Old Brown Windsor's store, Sergeant Fones urged his stout broncho to a quicker pace than usual. The broncho was, like himself, wasteful of neither action nor affection. The Sergeant had caught him wild and independent, had brought him in, broken him, and taught him obedience. They understood each other; perhaps they loved each other. But about that even Private Gellatly had views in common with the general sentiment as to the character of Sergeant Fones. The private remarked once on this point: "Sarpints alive! the heels of the one and the law of the other is the love of them. They'll weather together like the Divil and Death."

The Sergeant was brooding; that was not like him. He was hesitating; that was less like him. He turned his broncho round as if to cross the Big Divide and go back to Windsor's store: but he changed his mind again, and rode on toward David Humphrey's ranch. He sat as if he had been born in the saddle. His was a face for the artist, strong and clear, and having a dominant expression of force. The eyes were deep-set and watchful. A kind of disdain might be traced in the curve of the short upper lip, to which the moustache was clipped close—a good fit, like his coat. The disdain was more marked this morning.

The first part of his ride had been seen by Young Aleck, the second part by Mab

Humphrey. Her first thought on seeing him was one of apprehension for Young Aleck and those of Young Aleck's name. She knew that people spoke of her lover as a ne'er-do-weel; and that they associated his name freely with that of Pretty Pierre and his gang. She had a dread of Pierre, and, only the night before, she had determined to make one last great effort to save Aleck, and if he would not be saved—strange that, thinking it all over again, as she watched the figure on horseback coming nearer, her mind should swerve to what she had heard of Sergeant Fones's expected promotion. Then she fell to wondering if anyone had ever given him a real Christmas present; if he had any friends at all; if life meant anything more to him than carrying the law of the land across his saddle. Again he suddenly came to her in a new thought, free from apprehension, and as the champion of her cause to defeat the half-breed and his gang, and save Aleck from present danger or future perils.

She was such a woman as prairies nurture; in spirit broad and thoughtful and full of energy; not so deep as the mountain woman, not so imaginative, but with more persistency, more daring. Youth to her was a warmth, a glory. She hated excess and lawlessness, but she could understand it. She felt sometimes as if she must go far away into the unpeopled spaces, and shriek out her soul to the stars from the fulness of too much

life. She supposed men had feelings of that kind too, but they fell to playing cards and drinking instead of crying to the stars. Still, she preferred her way.

Once, Sergeant Fones, on leaving the house, said grimly after his fashion: "Not Mab but Ariadne—excuse a soldier's bluntness. . . . Good-bye!" and with a brusque salute he had ridden away. What he meant she did not know and could not ask. The thought instantly came to her mind: Not Sergeant Fones; but—who? She wondered if Ariadne was born on the prairie. What knew she of the girl who helped Theseus, her lover, to slay the Minotaur? What guessed she of the Slopes of Naxos? How old was Ariadne? Twenty?—For that was Mab's age. Was Ariadne beautiful?—She ran her fingers loosely through her short brown hair, waving softly about her Greek-shaped head, and reasoned that Ariadne must have been presentable or Sergeant Fones would not have made the comparison. She hoped Ariadne could ride well, for *she* could.

But how white the world looked this morning! and how proud and brilliant the sky! Nothing in the plane of vision but waves of snow stretching to the Cypress Hills; far to the left a solitary house, with its tin roof flashing back the sun, and to the right the Big Divide. It was an old-fashioned winter, not one in which bare ground and sharp winds make life outdoors inhospitable. Snow is

hospitable—clean, impacted snow; restful and silent. But there is one spot in the area of white, on which Mab's eyes are fixed now, with something different in them from what had been there. Again it was a memory with which Sergeant Fones was associated. One day in the summer just past she had watched him and his company put away to rest under the cool sod, where many another lay in silent company, a prairie wanderer, some outcast from a better life gone by. Afterwards, in her home, she saw the Sergeant stand at the window, looking out toward the spot where the waves in the sea of grass were more regular and greener than elsewhere and were surmounted by a high cross. She said to him—for she of all was never shy of his stern ways:

"Why is the grass always greenest *there,* Sergeant Fones?"

He knew what she meant, and slowly said: "It is the Barracks of the Free."

She had no views of life save those of duty and work and natural joy and loving a ne'er-do-weel, and she said: "I do not understand that."

And the Sergeant replied: "*Free among the Dead like unto them that are wounded and lie in the grave, who are out of remembrance.*"

But Mab said again: "I do not understand that either."

The Sergeant did not at once reply. He stepped to the door and gave a short command to someone without, and in a moment his company was mounted in line; handsome, dashing fellows; one the son of an English nobleman, one the brother of an eminent Canadian politician, one related to a celebrated English dramatist. He ran his eye along the line, then turned to Mab, raised his cap with machine-like precision, and said: "No, I suppose you do not understand *that*. Keep Aleck Windsor from Pretty Pierre and his gang. Good-bye."

Then he mounted and rode away. Every other man in the company looked back to where the girl stood in the doorway; he did not. Private Gellatly said, with a shake of the head, as she was lost to view: "Devils bestir me, what a widdy she'll make!" It was understood that Aleck Windsor and Mab Humphrey were to be married on the coming New Year's Day. What connection was there between the words of Sergeant Fones and those of Private Gellatly? None, perhaps.

Mab thinks upon that day as she looks out, this December morning, and sees Sergeant Fones dismounting at the door. David Humphrey, who is outside, offers to put up the Sergeant's horse; but he says: "No, if you'll hold him just a moment, Mr. Humphrey, I'll ask for a drink of something warm, and move on. Miss Mab is inside, I suppose?"

"She'll give you a drink of the *best* to be had on your patrol, Sergeant," was the laughing reply.

"Thanks for that, but tea or coffee is good enough for me," said the Sergeant. Entering, the coffee was soon in the hand of the hardy soldier. Once he paused in his drinking and scanned Mab's face closely. Most people would have said the Sergeant had an affair of the law in hand, and was searching the face of a criminal; but most people are not good at interpretation. Mab was speaking to the chore-girl at the same time and did not see the look. If she could have defined her thoughts when she, in turn, glanced into the Sergeant's face, a moment afterwards, she would have said: "Austerity fills this man. Isolation marks him for its own." In the eyes were only purpose, decision and command. Was that the look that had been fixed upon her face a moment ago? It must have been. His features had not changed a breath. Mab began their talk.

"They say that you are to get a Christmas present of promotion, Sergeant Fones."

"I have not seen it gazetted," he answered enigmatically.

"You and your friends will be glad of it."

"I like the service."

"You will have more freedom with a commission."

He made no reply, but rose and walked to

the window, and looked out across the snow, drawing on his gauntlets as he did so.

She saw that he was looking where the grass in summer was greenest!

He turned and said:

"I am going to barracks now. I suppose Young Aleck will be in quarters here on Christmas Day, Miss Mab?"

"I think so," and she blushed.

"Did he say he would be here?"

"Yes."

"Exactly."

He looked toward the coffee. Then:

"Thank you. . . . Good bye."

"Sergeant?"

"Miss Mab!"

"Will you not come to us on Christmas Day?"

His eyelids closed swiftly and opened again.

"I shall be on duty."

"And promoted?"

"Perhaps."

"And merry and happy?"—she smiled to herself to think of Sergeant Fones being merry and happy.

"Exactly."

The word suited him.

He paused a moment with his fingers on the latch, and turned round as if to speak; pulled off his gauntlet, and then as quickly put it on again. Had he meant to offer his hand in

good-bye? He had never been seen to take the hand of anyone except with the might of the law visible in steel.

He opened the door with the right hand, but turned round as he stepped out, so that the left held it while he faced the warmth of the room and the face of the girl.

The door closed.

Mounted, and having said good-bye to Mr. Humphrey, he turned towards the house, raised his cap with soldierly brusqueness, and rode away in the direction of the barracks.

The girl did not watch him. She was thinking of Young Aleck, and of Christmas Day, now near. The Sergeant did not look back.

Meantime the party at Windsor's store was broken up. Pretty Pierre and Young Aleck had talked together, and the old man had heard his son say:

"Remember, Pierre, it is for the last time."

Then they talked after this fashion:

"Ah, I know, *mon ami*; for the last time! Eh! *bien*! You will spend Christmas Day with us too—No? You surely will not leave us on the day of good fortune? Where better can you take your pleasure—for the last time? One day is not enough for farewell. Two, *three*; that is the magic number. You will, eh? no? Well, well, you will come to-morrow—and—eh, *mon ami*, where do you go the next day? Oh, *pardon*, I forgot, you

spend the Christmas Day—I know. And the day of the New Year? Ah, Young Aleck, that is what they say—the devil for the devil's luck. So!"

"Stop that, Pierre." There was fierceness in the tone. "I spend Christmas Day where you don't, and as I like, and the rest doesn't concern you. I drink with you, I play with you—*bien!* As you say yourself, *bien!* isn't that enough?"

"*Pardon!* We will not quarrel. No; we spend not the Christmas Day after the same fashion, quite; then, to-morrow at Pardon's Drive! Adieu!"

Pretty Pierre went out of one door, a malediction between his white teeth, and Aleck went out of another door with a malediction upon his gloomy lips. But both maledictions were levelled at the same person. Poor Aleck!

"Poor Aleck!" That is the way we sometimes think of a good nature gone awry; one that has learned to say cruel maledictions to itself, and against which demons hurl their deadly maledictions too. Alas, for the ne'er-do-weel!

That night a stalwart figure passed from David Humphrey's door, carrying with him the warm atmosphere of a good woman's love. The chilly outer air of the world seemed not to touch him, Love's curtains were drawn so close. Had one stood within "the Hunter's Room," as it was called, a

little while before, one would have seen a man's head bowed before a woman, and her hand smoothing back the hair from the handsome brow where dissipation had drawn some deep lines. Presently the hand raised the head until the eyes of the woman looked full into the eyes of the man.

"You will not go to Pardon's Drive again, will you, Aleck?"

"Never again after Christmas Day, Mab. But I must go to-morrow. I have given my word."

"I know. To meet Pretty Pierre and all the rest, and for what. Oh, Aleck, isn't the suspicion about your father enough, but you must put this on me as well?"

"My father must suffer for his wrongdoing if he does wrong, and I for mine."

There was a moment's silence. He bowed his head again.

"And I have done wrong to us both. Forgive me, Mab."

She leaned over and fondled his hair. "I forgive you, Aleck."

A thousand new thoughts were thrilling through him. Yet this man had given his word to do that which he must ask forgiveness of the woman he loved. But to Pretty Pierre, forgiven or unforgiven, he would keep his word. She understood it better than most of those who read this brief record can. Every sphere has its code of honour and duty peculiar to itself.

"You will come to me on Christmas morning, Aleck?"

"I will come on Christmas morning."

"And no more after that of Pretty Pierre?"

"And no more of Pretty Pierre."

She trusted him; but neither could reckon with unknown forces.

Sergeant Fones, sitting in the barracks in talk with Private Gellatly, said at that moment in a swift silence,—"Exactly."

Pretty Pierre, at Pardon's Drive, drinking a glass of brandy at that moment, said to the ceiling:

"No more of Pretty Pierre after to-morrow night, monsieur! *Bien!* If it is for the last time, then it is for the last time. So . . . so!"

He smiled. His teeth were amazingly white.

The stalwart figure strode on under the stars, the white night a lens for visions of days of rejoicing to come. All evil was far from him. The dolorous tide rolled back in this hour from his life, and he revelled in the light of a new day.

"When I've played my last card to-morrow night, with Pretty Pierre, I'll begin the world again," he whispered.

And Sergeant Fones in the barracks said just then, in response to a further remark of Private Gellatly,—"Exactly."

Young Aleck is singing now:

"Out from your vineland come
Into the prairies wild;
Here will we make our home,—
Father, mother, and child;
Come, my love, to our home,—
Father, mother, and child,
Father, mother, and—"

He fell to thinking again—"and child—and child,"—it was in his ears and in his heart.

But Pretty Pierre was singing softly to himself in the room at Pardon's Drive:

"Three good friends with the wine at night—
Vive la compagnie!
Two good friends when the sun grows bright—
Vive la compagnie!
Vive la, vive la, vive l'amour!
Vive la, vive la, vive l'amour!
Three good friends, *two* good friends—
Vive la compagnie!"

What did it mean?

Private Gellatly was cousin to Idaho Jack, and Idaho Jack disliked Pretty Pierre, though he had been one of the gang. The cousins had seen each other lately, and Private Gellatly had had a talk with the man

who was ha'sh. It may be that others besides Pierre had an idea of what it meant.

In the house at Pardon's Drive the next night sat eight men, of whom three were Pretty Pierre, Young Aleck, and Idaho Jack. Young Aleck's face was flushed with bad liquor and the worse excitement of play. This was one of the unreckoned forces. Was this the man that sang the tender song under the stars last night? Pretty Pierre's face was less pretty than usual; the cheeks were pallid, the eyes were hard and cold. Once he looked at his partner as if to say, "Not yet." Idaho Jack saw the look; he glanced at his watch; it was eleven o'clock. At that moment the door opened, and Sergeant Fones entered. All started to their feet, most with curses on their lips; but Sergeant Fones never seemed to hear anything that could make a feature of his face alter. Pierre's hand was on his hip, as if feeling for something. Sergeant Fones saw that; but he walked to where Aleck stood, with his unplayed cards still in his hand, and, laying a hand on his shoulder, said, "Come with me."

"Why should I go with you?"—this with a drunken man's bravado.

"You are my prisoner."

Pierre stepped forward. "What is his crime?" he exclaimed.

"How does that concern you, Pretty Pierre?"

"He is my friend."

"Is he your friend, Aleck?"

What was there in the eyes of Sergeant Fones that forced the reply,—"To-night, yes; to-morrow, no."?

"Exactly. It is near to-morrow; come."

Aleck was led towards the door. Once more Pierre's hand went to his hip; but he was looking at the prisoner, not at the Sergeant. The Sergeant saw, and his fingers were at his belt. He opened the door. Aleck passed out. He followed. Two horses were tied to a post. With difficulty Aleck was mounted. Once on the way his brain began slowly to clear, but he grew painfully cold. It was a bitter night. How bitter it might have been for the ne'er-do-weel let the words of Idaho Jack, spoken in a long hour's talk next day with Old Brown Windsor, show. "Pretty Pierre, after the two were gone, said, with a shiver of curses,—'Another hour and it would have been done, and no one to blame. He was ready for trouble. His money was nearly finished. A little quarrel easily made, the door would open, and he would pass out. His horse would be gone, he could not come back; he would walk. The air is cold, quite, quite cold; and the snow is a soft bed. He would sleep well and sound, having seen Pretty Pierre for the last time. And now!' The rest was French and furtive."

From that hour Idaho Jack and Pretty Pierre parted company.

Riding from Pardon's Drive, Young Aleck

noticed at last that they were not going toward the barracks.

He said: "Why do you arrest me?"

The Sergeant replied: "You will know that soon enough. You are now going to your own home. To-morrow you will keep your word and go to David Humphrey's place; the next day I will come for you. Which do you choose: to ride with me to-night to the barracks and know why you are arrested, or go, unknowing, as I bid you, and keep your word with the girl?"

Through Aleck's fevered brain, there ran the words of the song he sang before:

"Out from your vineland come
Into the prairies wild;
Here will we make our home,—
Father, mother, and child."

He could have but one answer.

At the door of his home the Sergeant left him with the words: "Remember you are on parole."

Aleck noticed, as the Sergeant strode away, that the face of the sky had changed, and slight gusts of wind had come up. At any other time his mind would have dwelt upon the fact. It did not do so now.

Christmas Day came. People said that the fiercest night, since the blizzard day of 1863, had been passed. But the morning was clear and beautiful. The sun came up like a great

flower expanding. First the yellow, then the purple, then the red, and then a mighty shield of roses. The world was a blanket of drift, and down, and glistening silver.

* * *

Mab Humphrey greeted her lover with such a smile as only springs to a thankful woman's lips. He had given his word and had kept it; and the path of the future seemed surer.

He was a prisoner on parole; still that did not depress him. Plans for coming days were talked of, and the laughter of many voices filled the house. The ne'er-do-weel was clothed and in his right mind. In the Hunter's Room the noblest trophy was the heart of a repentant prodigal.

In the barracks that morning a gazetted notice was posted, announcing with such technical language as is the custom, that Sergeant Fones was promoted to be a lieutenant in the Mounted Police Force of the North West Territory. When the officer in command sent for him he could not be found. But he was found that morning; and when Private Gellatly, with a warm hand, touching the glove of "iron and ice"—that, indeed, now, said: "Sergeant Fones, you are promoted, God help you!" he gave no sign. Motionless, stern, erect, he sat there upon his horse, beside a stunted larch tree. The broncho seemed to understand, for he did not stir, and had not done so for hours;—they could tell that. The bridle rein was still in

the frigid fingers, and a smile was upon the face.

A smile upon the face of Sergeant Fones.

Perhaps he smiled that he was going to the Barracks of the Free.

"Free among the Dead like unto them that are wounded and lie in the grave, that are out of remembrance."

In the wild night he had lost his way, though but a few miles from the barracks.

He had done his duty rigidly in that sphere of life where he had lived so much alone among his many comrades. Had he exceeded his duty once in arresting Young Aleck?

When, the next day, Sergeant Fones lay in the barracks, over him the flag for which he had sworn to do honest service, and his promotion papers in his quiet hand, the two who loved each other stood beside him for many a throbbing minute. And one said to herself, silently: "I felt sometimes—" but no more words did she say even to herself.

Old Aleck came in, and walked to where the Sergeant slept, wrapped close in that white frosted coverlet which man wears but once. He stood for a moment silent, his fingers numbly clasped.

Private Gellatly spoke softly: "Angels betide me, it's little we knew the great of him till he wint away; the pride, and the law,—and the love of him."

In the tragedy that faced them this Christmas morning one at least had seen "the

love of him.'' Perhaps the broncho had known it before.

Old Aleck laid a palm upon the hand he had never touched when it had life. ''He's—too—ha'sh,'' he said slowly.

Private Gellatly looked up wonderingly.

But the old man's eyes were wet.

FOREST STRATEGY

WHAT was known as the County Line Road, though in winter a highway of some importance for the sleds and sleighs of the lumbermen, was in summer little more than a broad straight trail, with grass and wildflowers growing undisturbed between the ruts. Just now, in the late and sodden northern spring, it was a disheartening stretch of hummocks and bog-holes, the bog-holes emphasized by a leg-breaking array of half rotten poles laid crossways. It was beautiful, however, in its lonesome, pallid, wistful fashion, for its hummocks, where dry enough, were already bluing tenderly with the first violets, its fringes were sparsely adorned with the shy blooms of windflower, dog-tooth and hepatica, and scattered through the dark ranks of the fir trees on either side were little colonies of white birch or silver poplar, just filming with the first ineffable green.

To the slim girl who, bundle in hand and with skirts tucked up half-way to the knee, was picking her steps along this exasperating path, the wilderness of the scene—its mingled harshness and delicacy—brought a pang which she could but dimly understand. The pale purpling of the violets, the aerial green-

ing of the birch-tops against the misty sky, the solemnity of the dark, massed fir trees—it was all beautiful in her eyes beyond anything words could suggest, but it made her heart ache with something like an intolerable homesickness. This was incomprehensible to her, since she was already, in a sense, at home. This was her native wilderness, this was the kind of chill, ethereal, lonesome spring which thrilled through the memories of her childhood. And she was nearing—she could not now be more than twelve miles from—the actual home of her childhood, that grey cabin on the outskirts of the remote and wind-swept settlement of Stony Brook.

For the past three years—going on four now, indeed—Sissy Bembridge had been away from this wild home, working hard and saving her wages, in the big shoe factory at K——, down by the sea. Called home suddenly by word that her mother was ill, she had come by train to the end of the branch, and tried to get a rig to take her around by the main road to Stony Brook. There was no rig to be had for love or money. Too anxious to wait and confident in her young vigour, she had left her luggage, tied up a few necessaries and eatables into a handy bundle, and set out by the short cut of the Old Line Road. Deaf to all dissuasions, she had counted on making Stony Brook before nightfall. Moreover—though she would never have acknowledged to herself that such a con-

sideration could count for anything when all her thoughts were on her mother's illness—she was aware of the fact that Connor's gang was stream-driving on the Ottanoonsis, and would be by now just about the point where the Line Road touches the river. Mike Farrell would be on the drive, and if she should chance to pass the time o' day with him, and let him know she was at home—why, there'd be no harm done to anybody.

For hours the girl trudged on, picking her way laboriously from side to side of the trail, and often compelled to stop and mend a bit of the corduroy roadway before she could get across some particularly bad stretch of bog. Her stout shoes and heavy woollen stockings were drenched with the icy water, but she was strong and full of abounding health and she felt neither cold nor fatigue. In spite of her anxiety about her mother, attention was absorbed by the old familiar atmosphere of the wilderness, the haunting colours, the chill, elusive, poignant smells. It was not till fairly well along in the afternoon, therefore, that she awoke to the fact that she had not covered more than half the distance which she had to travel. The heavy going, the abominable state of the road had utterly upset her calculations. The knowledge came to her with such a shock that she stopped short in consternation, almost dropping her bundle. At this rate she would be in the forest all night, for it would be impossible

to traverse the bog-holes in the dark. Child of the backwoods though she was, she had never slept out alone with the great trees and the mysterious night stillness. For the first time she cast a look of dread into the vistaed shadows of the fir trees. Forgetting the violets, the greening birches, the delicate spring smells, she hurried on at a reckless pace which soon forced her to stop and recover her breath. The best she could hope was to reach the river shore before dark, and perhaps find the camp of the stream drivers. She felt cold, and tired, and small, and terribly alone.

Yet, as a matter of fact, she was by no means so alone as she imagined. For the past half hour or more she had been strangely companioned.

Keeping parallel with the road, but at a distance, and hidden in the shadows, went an immense and gaunt black bear. For all his bulk, he went as noiselessly as a wildcat, skirting the open spaces, and stopping from time to time to sit up, motionless as a stump, and listen intently, and sniff the air with sensitive nostrils. But his little red-rimmed, savage eyes never lost sight of the figure of the girl for more than a few seconds at a time.

For bears this was the hungry season, the season of few roots and no fruits, few grubs and little honey. The black bear loves sweets and berries far better than any flesh food, however dainty. And human flesh he either

fears or dislikes so heartily that only under special stress can he bring himself to contemplate it as a possible article of diet. But this bear considered himself under special stress. His lean flanks were fairly clinging together from emptiness. To his eyes, thus prejudiced, the fresh young form of Sissy Bembridge, picking its way down the trail, looked appetizing. Girl was something he had never tried and it *might* be edible. At the same time this inoffensive and defenceless-looking creature undoubtedly belonged to the species of man, as his nostril well assured him. Therefore, small as she was, she was apt to be very dangerous, even to go off at times with flame and a terrifying noise. He was afraid to show himself to her, but his hunger, coupled with curiosity, led him to track her, perhaps in the hope that she might fall dead in the trail and so make it safe for him to approach and taste.

The girl, meanwhile, under the influence of her uncertainty and fatigue, was growing more and more apprehensive. She assured herself that there was nothing to fear, that none of the wild inhabitants of these New Brunswick woods would dare to interfere with a human being. At the same time she found herself glancing nervously over her shoulder, as the shadows lengthened and deepened, and all the wilderness turned to dusky violet. From the wet pools began the cold and melancholy flutings of the frogs, the

voice of solitude, and under the plangency of it she found the tears running down her cheeks. At this she shook herself indignantly, squared her shoulders, stamped her foot, and plunged ahead with a firm resolution that the approach of dark should *not* make her a fool. And away in the shadows of the firs the bear drew a little nearer, encouraged by the fading of daylight.

Just as it was growing so dark that she found it hard to choose her path between the pools and the bog-holes, to her infinite relief she caught sight of a cabin roof crowning a little rise of ground by the roadside. She broke into a run in her eagerness, reached the door and pounced upon it breathlessly. But there was no light in the window. With a sinking heart she realized that it was empty —that it was nothing more than a deserted lumber camp. Then, as if in answer to her vehement knocking, the door swung slowly open, showing the black darkness within. It had been merely closed, not latched. With a startled cry she sprang back, her skin creeping at the emptiness. Her first impulse was to turn and run. But she recovered herself, remembering that, after all, here was shelter and security for the night, infinitely preferable to a wet bivouac beneath some dripping fir tree.

She could not bring herself, however, to grope her way into the thick darkness of the interior. Stepping some paces back from the

threshold, she nervously untied her bundle and got out a box of matches. Lighting one, she shaded it with her hand, crept forward and cautiously peered inside. In the spurt of light, the place looked warm and snug. She returned for her bundle, went in and shut the door. Then she drew a long breath and felt better. The camp was small, but dry and in good repair. It was quite empty, except for the tier of bunks along one wall, a rough hewn log bench, a broken stove before the rude chimney, and several lengths of rust-eaten stove-pipe scattered on the floor. Lighting match after match, she hunted about for something to serve as fuel, for she craved the comfort, as well as the warmth of a fire.

There was nothing, however, but a few handfuls of dry, fine spruce tips left in one of the bunks. This stuff, she knew, would flare up at once and die in a couple of minutes. She made up her mind to go out and grope in the wet gloom for a supply of dead branches, though she was now conscious of a childish reluctance to face again the outer solitude. Almost furtively she lifted the heavy latch and opened the door half way. Instantly, with a gasp, she slammed it to again and leaned against it with quaking knees. Straight in front of her, not twenty feet away, black and huge against the grey glimmer of the open, she had seen the prowling bear.

Recovering herself after a few seconds, she felt her way stealthily to the bench and sat

down upon it, so as to face the two windows. The windows were small—so small that she was sure no monster such as the one which had just confronted her could by any possibility force its way through them. But she waited in a sort of horror, expecting momently that a dreadful shadowy face would darken one or the other of them and glare in upon her. She felt that the eyes of it would be visible by their own light, and she summoned up all her resolution that she might not scream when it appeared. For the time, however, nothing of the sort took place, and the two little squares continued to glimmer palely.

After what seemed to her an hour of breathless waiting, she heard a sound as of something rubbing slowly along the logs of the back wall. She swung around on her seat to stare with straining eyes at the spot where the sound came from. But, of course, all was blackness there. And she could not keep her eyes for more than a few seconds from the baleful fascination of the window-squares.

The door of the camp was a heavy one and sturdily put together, but along its bottom was a crack some half an inch in width. Presently there came a loud sniffing at this crack, and then the door creaked, as if a heavy body were leaning against it. She shuddered and gathered herself together for a desperate spring, expecting the latch or the hinges to

give way. But the honest, New Brunswick workmanship held, and she took breath again with a sob.

After this respite a thousand fantastic schemes of defence began to chase themselves through her brain. Out of them all she clung to just one, as possibly offering some hope in the last emergency. Noiselessly she gathered those few handfuls of withered spruce twigs and heaped them upon the top of the stove. If the bear should succeed in squeezing through the window or breaking down the door, she would light the dry stuff, and perhaps the sudden blaze and smoke might frighten him away. That it would daunt him for a moment, she felt sure, but she was equally sure that its efficacy would not last very long.

As she was working up the details of this scheme—more for the sake of keeping her terror in check than for any great faith she had in it—the thing she had been expecting happened. One of the glimmering, grey-blue squares grew suddenly dark. She gave a burst of shrill, hysterical laughter and ran at it, as a trapped rat will jump at a hand approaching the wires. As she did so, she scratched a bunch of four or five matches and threw them, spluttering and hissing, in the face of the apparition. She had a glimpse of small, savage eyes and an open, white-fanged mouth. Then the great face withdrew itself.

Somewhat reassured to find that the monster could be disconcerted by the spurt of a match, she groped back to her seat, and fell to counting, by touch, the number of these feeble weapons still left in the box. She had only six more, and she began to repent of having used the others so recklessly. After all, as she told herself, *that* bear could not possibly squeeze himself through the window, so why should he not amuse himself by looking in at her if he wanted to? It might keep him occupied. It occurred to her that she ought to be glad that the bear was such a big one. His face alone had fairly filled the window. She would save the remaining matches.

For a good ten minutes nothing more happened, though from time to time her intent ears caught the sound of cautious sniffing on the other side of the log walls, as if the enemy were reconnoitering to find a weak point in her fortress. She smiled scornfully there in the dark, knowing well the strength of those log walls. Then, all at once, her face stiffened and she sat rigid, clutching the edge of the bench with both hands. The door had once more begun to creak and groan under the weight of a heavy body surging against it.

There was a sound of scratching, a rattle of iron claws, which told her that the beast was rearing itself upright against the door. The massive paws seemed to fumble in-

quisitively. Then her blood froze. She heard the heavy latch lift with a click.

The door swung open.

She felt as if she were struggling in a nightmare. With a choked scream she leapt straight at the door. She had a mad impulse to slam it in the monster's face and brace herself, however impotently, against it. As she sprang, however, her foot caught in one of the pieces of stovepipe. She fell headlong, and the pipe flew half across the floor, clattering over its fellows as it went and raising a prodigious noise.

Through a long, long moment of horror she lay flat on her face, expecting a gigantic paw to fall upon her neck as a cat's paw falls upon a mouse. Nothing happened. She ventured to raise her head. The door was wide open and the doorway quite clear. A dozen feet away from it, at the edge of the road, stood the bear, staring irresolutely. He had been rather taken aback by the suddenness with which the door had flown open and had hesitated to enter, fearing a trap. The wild clatter of the stovepipes had still further disturbed him, and he had withdrawn to consider the situation. In one bound the girl was at the door and had shut it with a bang.

The problem was now to fix the latch so that it could not again be lifted from the outside. She lit one more precious match, examined the mechanism, and hunted frantically for a splinter of wood with which to jam

it down. There was nothing in sight that would serve. She tried to tear off a strip of her petticoat to bind it down with, but all her underwear was of a most serviceable sturdiness and would not tear. She heard the bear moving again outside. She heard his breathing close to the door. Desperately she thrust a couple of fingers into the space above the latch, so that it would not lift. Then with the other hand she whipped off one shoe and stocking. The stocking was just the thing, and in a minute she had the latch secure.

It was no more than secure, however, before the weight of the bear once more came against the door. From the heavy, scratchy fumblings the girl could perceive that her enemy was trying to repeat his former manoeuvre. On this point, at least, she had no anxiety. She knew the door could not now be unlatched from the outside. She could almost afford to laugh in her satisfaction as she groped her way back to her seat.

But her satisfaction was of brief life. The door began to creak more and more violently. It was evident that the bear, having once learned that this was a possible way in, was determined to test it to the utmost. The girl sprang up. She heard the screws of a hinge begin to draw with an ominous grating sound. Now at least the crisis was truly and inevitably upon her. And, to her amazement, she was less terrified than before. The panic horror had all gone. She had small hope of

escape, but her brain worked calmly and clearly. She moved over beside the broken stove, and stood, match in hand, ready to set fire to the pile of dry spruce tips.

The door groaned and creaked. Then the upper hinge gave way and the door leaned inward, admitting a wide streak of glimmer. For some moments, thereafter, all sounds ceased, as if the bear had drawn back cautiously to consider the result of his efforts. Then he came on again with more confidence. Under his weight the door came crashing down, but slowly, with the noise of yielding latch and snapping iron. As it fell, the girl scratched the match and set it to the dry stuff.

In the doorway the bear paused, eyeing suspiciously the tiny blue spurt of the struggling match. After a second or two, however, he came forward with a savage rush, furious at having been so long baulked. The girl slipped around the stove. And just as the bear reached the place where she had been standing, the spruce tips sparked sharply and flared up in his face. With a loud woo-oof of indignation and alarm, he recoiled, turned tail, scurried out into the road and disappeared.

In a couple of minutes the cabin was full of sparks and smoky light. The girl ran to the door and peered out. Her heart sank once more. There was the bear, a few paces up the road, calmly sitting on his haunches,

waiting. He had seen camp fires before, and he was sitting for this one to die down.

Sissy Bembridge knew that it would die down at once, and then—well, her last card would have been played. She wrung her hands, but in the new self-possession which had come to her, she could not believe that the end had really arrived. It was unbelievable that within some half a dozen minutes she would become a lifeless, hideous, shapeless thing beneath those mangling claws. No, there must be—there was—something to do, if she could only think of it.

And then it came to her.

At first thought the idea was so audacious, so startling, so fantastic, that she shrank from it as absurd. But on second thoughts she convinced herself not only that it was the one thing to be done, but also that it was practical and would almost certainly prove effective. But there was not a moment to be lost.

Snatching up one of the fragments of stove-pipe, she used the edge as a shovel, and carried a portion of the blazing stuff to the open doorway. Here she deliberately set fire to the dry wood-work, nursing with hand and breath the tiny, uplicking flames. She fed them with a few more scraps of spruce scraped up from another bunk, till she saw that they would surely catch. Then, with her stove-pipe shovel, she started another fire in the further corner of the camp, and yet another in the uppermost bunk. When

satisfied that all were fairly going, she retrieved her stocking from the broken latch, reclothed her naked foot and set her bundle safely outside. Then she looked at the bear, still sitting on his haunches a little way up the road, and she laughed at him. At last she had him worsted. She darted in through the doorway—now blazing cheerfully all up one side—and dragged forth the heavy bench, that she might have something dry to sit on while she watched the approaching conflagration.

Her calculation—and she knew it was a sound one—was that the cabin, a solid structure of logs, would burn vigorously the whole night through, and terrify the bear to final flight. If it should, by any chance die down before full daylight, she would be able to build a circle of small fires with the burning remnants. And she felt sure that in daylight her enemy would not dare to renew the attack.

In another ten minutes the roof was ablaze, and soon the flames were shooting up riotously. The woods were lighted redly for hundreds of yards around, the pools in the road were polished copper, and the bear was nowhere to be seen. Sissy dragged her bench and bundle still further away, and sat philosophically warming her wet feet. The reaction from her terror, and her sense of triumph, made her so excited that fatigue and anxiety were all forgotten. She grew warm

and comfortable, and finally, opening her bundle, she got out a package of neglected sandwiches and made a contented meal.

As she was shaking the crumbs from her lap, she heard voices and pounding, splashing hoofs from up the trail. She sprang to her feet. Three lumbermen came riding into the circle of light and drew rein before her in astonishment. "Sissy—Bembridge—*you!*" cried the foremost, springing from his saddleless mount.

The girl ran to him. "Oh, Mike," she exclaimed, crying and laughing all at the same time, and clutching him by the arm, "I *had* to do it! The bear nigh got me! Take me to Mother, quick. I'm *that* tired."

BARGAINING WITH THE FACTOR

IN the old days, in certain parts of the country, when the Indians came to the posts to get their "advances" or to barter their winter's catch of fur, the traders had to exercise constant caution to prevent them from looting the establishments. At some of the posts only a few Indians at a time were allowed within the fort, and even then trading was done through a wicket. But that applied only to the Plains Indians and to some of the natives from the Pacific coast; for the Strong Woods people were remarkably honest. Even to-day this holds good, notwithstanding the fact that they are now so much in contact with white men. Nowadays the Indians in any locality rarely cause trouble, and at the trading-posts the business of the Indian shops is conducted in a quiet and orderly way.

The traders do most of their bartering with the Indians in the early summer when the hunters return laden with the spoils of the winter's hunt. In the early autumn, when the Indians are about to leave for their hunting-grounds, much business is done, but little in the way of barter. At that season the Indians procure their outfit for the winter. Being usually insolvent, owing to the leisure-

ly time spent upon the tribal camping grounds, they receive the necessary supplies on credit. The amount of credit, or "advances," given to each Indian seldom exceeds one-third of the value of his annual catch. That is the white man's way of securing, in advance, the bulk of the Indian's prospective hunt; yet, although a few of them are sometimes slow in settling their debts, they are never a match for the civilized white man.

When I entered the trading room I saw it was furnished with a U-shaped counter paralleling three sides of the room, and with a large box stove in the middle of the intervening space. On the shelves and racks upon the walls and from hooks in the rafters rested or hung a conglomeration of goods to be offered in trade to the natives. There were copper pails and calico dresses, pain-killer bottles and Hudson's Bay blankets, sow-belly and chocolate drops, castor oil and gun worms, frying pans and ladies' wire bustles, guns and corsets, axes and ribbons, shirts and hunting knives, perfumes and bear-traps. In a way, the Indian shop resembled a department store, except that all departments were jumbled together in a single room. At one post I visited years ago—that of Abitibi—they had a rather progressive addition in the way of a millinery department. It was contained in a large, lidless packing-case against the side of which stood a long steering paddle for the clerk's use in stirring

about the varied assortment of white woman's ancient headgear, should a fastidious Indian woman request to see more than the uppermost layer.

Already a number of Indians were being served by the Factor and Delaronde, the clerk, and I had not long to wait before Oo-koo-hoo appeared. I surmised at once who he was, for one could see by the merest glance at his remarkably pleasant, yet thoroughly clever face, that he was all his name implied, a wise, dignified old gentleman who was in the habit of observing much more than he gave tongue to—a rare quality in men—especially white men. Even before I heard him speak, I liked Oo-koo-hoo—The Owl.

But before going any farther, I ought to explain that as I am endeavouring to render a faithful description of forest life, I am going to repeat in the next few paragraphs part of what once appeared in one of my fictitious stories of northern life. I then made use of the matter because it was the truth, and for that very reason I am going to repeat it; also because this transaction as depicted is typical of what usually happens when the Indians try to secure their advances. Furthermore, I give the dialogue in detail, as perchance some reader may feel as Thoreau did, when he said: "It would be some advantage to live a primitive and frontier life, though in the midst of an outward civilization, if only to learn what are the gross

necessaries of life and what methods have been taken to obtain them; or even to look over the old daybooks of the merchants, to see what it was that men most commonly bought at the stores, what they stored, that is, what are the grossest groceries."

But while the following outfit might be considered the Indian's grossest groceries, the articles are not really necessary at all for him; for, to go the extreme, a good woodsman can hunt without even gun, axe, knife or matches, and can live happily absolutely independent of our civilization.

As the Factor was busy with another Indian when the Chief entered—for Oo-koo-hoo was the chief of the Ojibways of that district—he waited patiently, as he would not deign to do business with a clerk. When he saw the trader free, he greeted:

"Quay, quay, hugemow!" (Good day, Master.)

"Gude day, mon Oo-koo-hoo, what can I do for ye the day?" amicably responded the factor.

"Master, it is this way. I am about to leave for my hunting-grounds; but this time I am going to spend the winter upon a new part of them, where I have not hunted for years, and where game of all kinds will be plentiful. Therefore I want you to give me liberal advances, so that my hunt will not be hindered."

"Fegs, Oo-koo-hoo, yon's an auld, auld

farrant. But ye're well kenned for a leal, honest man; and sae, I'se no be unco haird upon ye."

So saying, the Factor made him a present of a couple of pounds of flour, half a pound of pork, half a pound of sugar, a quarter of a pound of tea, a plug of tobacco, and some matches. The Factor's generosity was prompted largely by his desire to keep the Indian in good humour. After a little friendly chaffing the Factor promised to give the hunter advances to the extent of one hundred "skins."

A "skin," or, as it is often called, a "made beaver," is equivalent to one dollar in the Hudson Bay and the Mackenzie River districts, but only fifty cents in the region of the Athabasca.

Perhaps it should be explained here, that while Oo-koo-hoo could speak broken English, he always preferred to use his own language when addressing the trader, whom he knew to be quite conversant with Ojibway, and so, throughout this book, I have chosen to render the Indian's speech as though it was translated from Ojibway into English, rather than at any time render it in broken English, as the former is not only easier to read, but is more expressive of the natural quality of the Indian's speech. In olden days, some of the chiefs who could not speak English at all, were, it is claimed, eloquent orators—far outclassing our greatest statesmen.

Oo-koo-hoo having ascertained the amount of his credit, reckoned that he would use about fifty skins in buying traps and ammunition; the rest he would devote to the purchase of necessaries for himself and his party, as his son-in-law had arranged with him to look after his family's wants, in his absence. So the old gentleman now asked for the promised skins. He had handed one hundred marked goose quills representing that number of skins. After checking them over in bunches of ten, he entrusted twenty to his eldest grandson Ne-geek—The Otter—to be held in reserve for ammunition and tobacco, and ten to his eldest granddaughter, Neykia, with which to purchase an outfit for the rest of the party.

For a long time Oo-koo-hoo stood immersed in thought. At last his face brightened. He had reached a decision. For years he had coveted a new muzzle-loading gun, and he felt that the time had now arrived to get it. So he picked out one valued at forty skins and paid for it. Then, taking back the quills his grandson held, he bought twenty skins' worth of powder, caps, shot, and bullets. Then he selected for himself a couple of pairs of trousers, one pair made of moleskin and the other of tweed, costing ten skins; two shirts and a suit of underwear, ten skins; half a dozen assorted traps, ten skins. Finding that he had used up all his quills, he drew on those set aside for his wife and son-in-

law's family and bought tobacco, five skins; files, one skin; an axe, two skins; a knife, one skin; matches, one-half skin; and candy for his youngest grandchild, one-half skin. On looking over his acquisitions he discovered that he must have at least ten skins' worth of twine for nets and snares, five skins' worth of tea, one skin worth of soap, one skin worth of needles and thread, as well as a tin pail and a new frying pan. After a good deal of haggling the Factor threw him that number of quills, and Oo-koo-hoo's manifest contentment somewhat relieved the trader's anxiety.

A moment later, however, Oo-koo-hoo was reminded by his wife, Ojistoh, that there was nothing for her, so she determined to interview the Factor herself. She tried to persuade him to give her twenty skins in trade, and promised to pay for them in the spring with rat and ermine skins, or—should those fail her—with her dog, which was worth fully thirty skins. She had been counting on some cotton print for a dress, as well as thread and needles, to say nothing of extra tea, which in all would amount to at least thirty-five or forty skins. When, however, the Factor allowed her only ten skins, her disappointment was keen, and she ended by getting a shawl. Then she left the trading-room to pay a visit to the Factor's wife, and confide to her the story of her expectation and of her disappointment so movingly that she would get

a cup of tea, a word of sympathy, and perhaps even an old petticoat.

In the meantime Oo-koo-hoo was catching it again. He had forgotten his daughter; so after more haggling the trader advanced her ten skins. Her mind had long been made up. She bought a three-point blanket, a small head-shawl, and a piece of cotton print. Then the grandsons crowded round and grumbled because there was nothing for them.

By this time the trader was beginning to feel that he had done pretty well for the family already; but he kept up the appearance of bluff good humour and asked:

"Well, Oo-koo-hoo, what wad ye be wantin' for the laddies?"

"My grandsons are no bunglers, as you know," said the proud old grandsire. "They can each kill at least twenty skins' worth of fur."

"Aye, aye!" rejoined the trader, "I shall e'en gi'e them twenty atween them."

In the goodness of his heart he offered the boys some advice as to what they should buy. "Ye'll be wantin' to buy traps, I'm jalousin', an' sure ye'll turn out to be graun' hunters, Nimrods o' the North, that men'll mak' sangs aboot i' the comin' years." He cautioned them to choose wisely, because from henceforth they would be personally responsible for everything they bought, and must pay, "skin for skin," (the motto of the Hudson's Bay Company).

The boys listened with gloomy civility, and then purchased an assortment of useless trifles such as ribbons, tobacco, buttons, candy, rings, pomatum, perfume, and Jew's harps.

The Factor's patience was now nearly exhausted. He picked up his account book, and strode to the door, and held it open as a hint to the Indians to leave. But they pretended to take no notice of his action.

The granddaughters, who had been growing more and more anxious lest they should be forgotten, now began to be voluble in complaint. Oo-koo-hoo called the trader aside and explained the trouble. The Factor realized that he was in a corner, and that if he now refused supplies he would offend the old chief and drive him to sell his best furs to the opposition trader in revenge. He surrendered and the girls received ten skins between them.

At long last everyone was pleased, except the unhappy Factor. Gathering his purchases together, Oo-koo-hoo tied up the powder, shot, tea, and sugar in the legs of the trousers; placed the purchases for his wife, daughter and granddaughters in the shawl, and the rest of the goods in the blanket.

Then he made the discovery that he had neither flour nor grease. He could not start without them. The Factor's blood was now almost at the boiling pitch, but he dared not

betray his feelings; for the Indian was ready to take offence at the slightest word, so rich and independent did he feel. Angering him now would simply mean adding to the harvest of the opposition trader. He chewed his lower lip in the effort to smother his disgust, and growled out with an angry grin:

"Hoots, mon, ye ha'e gotten owre mickle already. It's fair redeeklus. I just cannot gi'e ye onything mair ava!"

"Ah, but, master, you have forgotten that I am a great hunter. And that my son-in-law is a great hunter, too. This is but the outfit for a lazy man! Besides, the Great Company is rich, and I am poor. If you will be stingy, I shall not trouble you more."

Once again the Factor gave way and handed out the flour and grease. All filed out and the Factor turned the key in the door. As he walked towards the house, his spirits began to rise, and he clapped the old Indian on the back good-naturedly. Presently Oo-koo-hoo halted in his tracks. He had forgotten something; he had nothing in case of sickness.

"Master, you know my voyage is long; my work is hard; the winter is severe. I am not very strong now: I may fall ill. My wife—she is not very strong—may fall ill also. My son-in-law is not very strong: he may fall ill, too. My daughter is not . . ."

"De'il ha'e ye!" roared the Factor. What is't the noo?"

"Never mind, it will do to-morrow," muttered the hunter, with an offended air.

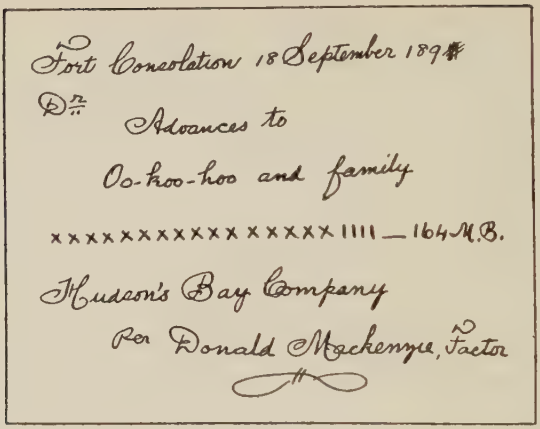
"As I'm a leevin' sinner, it's noo or it's never," insisted the Factor, who had no desire to let the Indian have another day at it. "Come back this verra minnit, an' I'll gi'e ye a wheen poothers an' sic like, that'll keep ye a' hale and hearty, I houp, till ye win hame again."

The Factor took him back and gave him some salts, peppermint, pain-killer, and sticking plaster, to offset all the ills that might befall him and his party during the next ten months.

Once more they started for the house. The Factor was ready to put up with anything as long as he could get them away from the store. Oo-koo-hoo now told the trader not to charge anything against his wife as he would settle her account himself, and that as Amik would be back in the morning, he, too, would want his advances, and if they had forgotten anything, Amik could get it next day.

The Factor scowled again, but it was too late.

While the Indians lounged around the kitchen and talked to the Factor's wife and the half-breed servant girl, the Factor went to his office and made out Oo-koo-hoo's bill, which read:



The Indian now told the trader that he wanted him to send the "Fur Runners" to him with supplies in ten weeks' time and that he must have a "geese-wark," or measure of days, in order to know exactly when the Fur Runners would arrive at his camp. So the Factor made out the calendar on the following page.

The characters to the left are syllabic—a method of writing taught to the Indians by the missionaries. They spell the words September, October and November. The I's represent week-days and the X's Sundays. The calendar begins with the 18th of September, and the crescent marks the 29th of November, the date of the arrival of the Fur Runners. The Indian would keep track of the days by pricking a pin-hole every day above the proper figure.

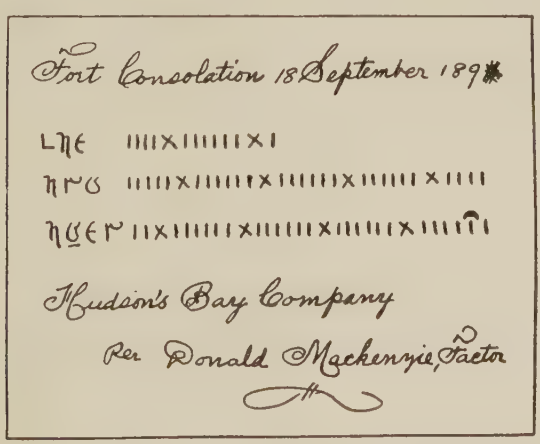
Presently the Factor and I were alone for a few moments, and he growled:

"Whit d'ye think o' the ould de'il?"

"Fine, I'll go with him, if he will take me."

So I had a talk with the old Indian, and when he learned that I had no intention of killing game, but merely wanted to accompany him and his son-in-law on their hunts, he consented and we came to terms. I was to be ready to start early on the morning of the 20th. Then Oo-koo-hoo turned to the trader and said:

"Master, it is getting late, and it will be later when I reach my lodge. I am hungry now, and I shall be hungrier still when I get home. I am growing . . ."



"Aye, aye, ma birkie," interrupted the Factor. "I un'erstaun fine." He bestowed

upon the confident petitioner a further gratuity of flour, tea, sugar, and tallow, a clay pipe, a plug of tobacco, and some matches, so as to save him from having to break in upon his winter supplies before he started on his journey to the hunting-grounds. Oo-koo-hoo solemnly expressed his gratitude.

"Master, my heart is pleased. You are my father. I shall now hunt well, and you shall have all my fur."

To show his appreciation of the compliment the Factor gave him an old shirt and wished him good luck.

In the meantime, Oo-koo-hoo's wife had succeeded in obtaining from the Factor's wife old clothes for her grandchildren, needles and thread and some food. Just as they got ready to go, the younger woman, Amik's wife, remembered that the baby had brought a duck as a present for the Factor's children, so they had to give a present in return, worth at least twice as much as the duck.

The Factor and his family were by this time sufficiently weary. Right willingly did they go down to the landing to see the Indians off. No sooner had these taken their places in the canoes and paddled a few strokes away than the grandmother remembered that she had a present for the Factor and his wife. All paddled back again, and the Factor and his wife were each presented with a pair of moccasins. No, she would not take anything in return, at least, not just now.

To-morrow, perhaps, when they came to say good-bye.

"Losh me! I thocht they were aff and gane!" exclaimed the Factor, as he turned and strode up the beach.

THE LIVING FOREST

[Two boys, Lincoln Lee and Gordon Douglas, joined an expedition to the far north at the close of school one midsummer. When they had travelled almost seven hundred miles from the railroad a very exciting adventure befell them just as they were leaving a lake on the shores of which they had camped for their noonday meal.]

PRESENTLY the paddles dipped and we were under way. Soon the shores changed. The rocky outcroppings grew larger, and more numerous too, and rising high and higher they at last formed two fortresses that stood one on either side of the stream. Yet they leaned so close together that they squeezed the river into a perfect fury. Between the upper end of a rocky island and the mainland on our right a big tree hung horizontally. Beneath the tree glided a gleaming, squirming lane of water that reminded me of a gigantic snake racing into its hole.

Suddenly the canoe turned to the right, and into that hole we swept with a rush. A moment later everyone ducked his head as we glided under the hanging tree. The canoe now began swerving this way and that—like a ship without a rudder. Hill looked back with anger. I, too, glanced behind. It wasn't what I saw, but what I didn't see that

startled me. Our steersman had disappeared. Instantly Hill bellowed something in Indian. Quick as a flash an old man grabbed the spare steering paddle and worked with might and main.

Now down a steeper slope we flew like an express train through a canyon. Trees and rocks went flying by. Spray hit us like buckshot. Perpendicular walls of rock on either side made landing impossible. Ragged boulders appeared above the foam and threatened to sink us. Suddenly we struck a submerged rock that bellied up the bottom of our canoe, cracked her ribs, and ripped her open. Now we were sinking.

I looked ahead. Our end was nearer than I thought. A huge "cellar" now opened before us. It must have been caused by a big hole in the bottom of the river bed. It suggested an enormous, irregular basin of greenish black glass. Although entirely composed of the river's water, it looked completely dry and empty. There wasn't even foam in it. It filled me with awe. But into it we had to go.

Over the rim went the bow. Then ribs cracked again as the stern upheaved. And down we went in a sickening dive. The tons of water already aboard now lunged forward and smashed against the hooded bow with the force of a battering ram. Thus in one great plunge we struck the cellar's bottom, and the force of the water aboard not only

drove the wrecked canoe from under us, but ripped her clean in two.

Now we were struggling for our lives in that swiftly moving well; but while we were whirled along the bottom of that horrible hole we didn't sink any more than we would have sunk in sand, so hard was the water made by the force of the racing river. Then the current dragged us up and out and plunged us into a smothering swell. Some distance away I came to the surface, but only long enough to gasp half a breath; yet I saw a moccasined foot whirled above a crest of foam. . . . I sank again. My lungs were going to burst. Then I was tossed into air.

At that moment I saw Lincoln whirled around in a whirlpool. The next instant he sank like a stone. Now a copper-coloured hand shot up out of foam, clutched for something that wasn't there . . . and sank again. Something was floating near me. I strained toward it and was able to seize hold. It was a mass of dark brown hair. It was Lincoln's.

Although I could do no more than keep afloat I still held his hair. Presently we were swept close to a big rock. I clutched for it but missed by an inch or two. Then the current rolled us into the boulder's back-water and we were swept up toward the rock again. I now seized hold, crawled up on top and there, with the exhausted Lincoln beside me, I rested upon the boulder.

I was so done out that I didn't know how long we had been there when I heard a rifle shot. A moment later came another report; then another and another, roaring and re-roaring above the noise of the river. Then came the sound of a man shouting. I looked around and saw old Bill Hill standing on the southern shore, about fifty feet from our boulder.

"Are you all right?" he called above the roar.

I shouted in reply. Then Lincoln raised his head and waved in answer. Bill shouted again:

"Don't worry. I'm goin' to make a line!"

Then he disappeared among the trees. Later he returned, carrying a bundle of thin poles on his shoulder and a coil of line that hung from his hand. Turning up stream he halted on reaching a rocky point that caused the current to sheer off shore. Then, fastening one end of the line to a small stone, he tied the other end to one end of a boom he had made from the poles, suggestive of a wooden chain. Casting the boom, one pole at a time, into the current, he threw the stone as far out over the water as the line would allow, and when the line grew taut, it jerked the stone down into the river. The current, striking against the anchored line, forced the boom out into the stream much farther than it otherwise would have gone. As the boom floated down, it dragged its anchor, and thus

the force of the current outstretched the wooden chain against our boulder, and we seized it.

The boom was made of dry spruce poles tied end to end—though about six inches apart—with thongs of green willow bark. The line was made of the same material.

"Take hold th' end pole," Bill called, "but only one at a time. An' hang on tight."

Lincoln seized hold and, stepping into foam, away he was whirled in a quarter circle through the racing torrent. Then Bill landed him about fifty yards below by carefully hauling him into an eddy. Again the wooden chain was cast adrift; once more I caught it, and, except for being tossed topsy-turvy, and bruised against stone, I too was safely landed ashore.

[Realising that they must make the return journey alone they immediately set about building a canoe, and foraging for such provisions as might be found in the forest to replace their supplies which had been lost.]

After setting the snares, curiosity led us on, and coming to a creek we discovered a beaver dam and three beaver houses. Hearing the sound of rapids, we turned up stream. It was a beautiful brook, rippling and sparkling through a jungle of overhanging trees and ferns.

Suddenly the old hunter stopped, and without turning his head signalled caution with his hand behind his back. Instinctively we understood. Seeing him sink upon his

knees, we did likewise and noiselessly crawled after him through the undergrowth. Presently he stopped again. Peering over his back we beheld a sight to remember. An old black bear was squatting upon a rock amid the noisy little rapids, not more than a hundred feet away.

"Keep still an' watch him," Bill whispered.

The bear was sitting with his hind legs outspread, and his heels braced against a ridge, while his stumpy little tail was curved over the boulder's edge, as though he were using it to help hang on. He was leaning over as if watching something in the brook. Suddenly his body dropped low, and through the swift, foam-flecked water he made a violent scoop with his upturned right forepaw. Then something whirled a quarter circle through the air and landed upon the opposite bank. The bear was fishing.

Renewing his motionless pose of stooping low and peering into the rapids, the bear never as much as noticed us, for the wind was blowing our scent away. The babbling brook drowned our whispering, and the leafy screen hid us from view. Minutes passed. Then there was another flash, another splash, another scoop, another shiny blur flying through the air, and another fish landed upon the bank. Glancing over his shoulder to see if the fish were safely ashore, the bear then resumed his pose, and again tiresome min-

utes passed. Then once more another splashing, flashing movement, and another fish was landed ashore.

Now I noticed among the leaves and ferns a little black object waddling toward the stranded fish, then another little black creature waddled after the first. They looked like twins and were black bear cubs. I imagined they were about six weeks old, judging from their size, for they were quite small. But Bill afterward told me:

"No. Not six weeks, but six months old; for bear cubs are born in January. The reason they look so small in midsummer is that they weigh only ten or twelve ounces at birth. In fact, when born they're only about the size of a red squirrel, while the mother may weigh four or five hundred pounds."

The playful little beggars started to eat the fish ashore, and now the old bear on the rock saw them and began to growl. It reminded me of the way white men swear. But the cubs didn't care. They went on eating. Then the old bear leaped off his rock, floundered through the foaming water, and made a rush for the cubs. When he caught them he struck them on the neck or head with first one and then the other of his open forepaws. His last two blows knocked them helter-skelter, and from fright and rage they screamed for their mother.

Instantly the top leaves of an alder clump began to swish and swirl; then the swishing

and swirling leaves began running in a beeline for the cubs. And when the swirling top leaves reached the end of the thicket nearest the cubs, out leaped another black bear. It was their mother. With a savage growl she lunged at the old black fisherman. With wonderful agility he dodged her gleaming teeth, but with all the force with which she could drive her long extended claws she hit him such a wallop that a patch of his new summer coat was torn away. Then, like a blue-black streak, the old male bear lit out for parts unknown. After eating the fish, the old lady bear and her little brats wandered away from "Beaver Creek," as Bill called it.

"Bears are certainly amusin' critters. They're mighty human. They're enough to make an owl laff," the old half-breed chuckled.

[On the return journey they camped one evening on the shores of Wolverine Lake.]

After supper the moon came up over the hills and mist rose over the lake; and it was with contentment we sat upon our bed beside our fire and chatted happily of many things. We could hear the gentle lapping of the water along the sandy beach, and feel an occasional breath of wind from the southeast. Suddenly out of the stillness of the night we heard a strange, harsh sound, something between the bark of a large dog and the short, regular croaking of a giant bullfrog. It came

from a point along the shore a little west of us but on our side of the island. Again it sounded:

"Oo-ah, Oo-ah, Oo-ah."

"What's that?" Link whispered.

"It's a bull moose callin' a cow," the old hunter answered, "an' maybe we can bring it this way."

Hurriedly seizing a piece of birchbark, he twisted it into the form of a megaphone about eighteen inches long, and tied it with a thong. Standing in the shadow of the bushes on the brow of the little cliff, he drew a long breath, placed the birchbark horn to his lips and uttered a most unearthly noise that made gooseflesh run up and down my back. The sound he made was in imitation of the rising and falling inflection of the long-drawn bellow that a cow moose makes during the mating season. Then we listened for an answer and soon we heard the short, guttural grunt of the bull's reply:

"Oo-ah, Oo-ah."

Every little while we heard it again and soon learned from the sound that the bull was steadily advancing toward us. I was thrilled and could see Link was, too; both of us were all eagerness to catch sight of the big brute.

After an interval of several minutes, old Bill again imitated the call of a cow, and before he had lowered his horn, we heard a great splashing of water along the northern shore

but several hundred yards east of us. Immediately afterward, from the same direction, we heard the loud grunting of another bull. Instantly the bull on our southern shore replied louder than before, and a few moments later he could be heard trotting along the southern beach toward us. Presently we saw a startling, massive form in the shape of a gray silhouette that steadily grew larger and darker as it came through the mist. It grew into a dark, brownish gray, swept along the shore, and stopping suddenly in front of us, began slashing furiously a clump of bushes with its great horns. The hoarse challenge of the second bull, on the northern side of the point, rang out again and was answered defiantly by the southern bull before us. Then we could hear the northern bull break into a trot as it followed the beach round the end of the point.

A few moments later we saw them lunge at each other and heard the clashing of their immense, palmated horns, as the big brutes came together like enormous battering rams. The fight had begun. Spellbound, we crouched, staring at the battle. Separating, the bulls drew back, stood apart a moment, then suddenly plunged forward, smashing together in head-on collision that made the air ring with the clanging of their horns. On becoming interlocked, each bull strove with straining, swollen neck, to force the other down upon his knees.

Soon realizing the uselessness of spending strength that way—for they seemed evenly matched—the northern bull suddenly freed his horns, drew back a little, and while watching his chance for a sudden lunge, stood—not pawing the ground as would a bull of domestic breed—but with his hind feet firmly planted apart; then jumped the forepart of his body rapidly up and down, and with stiffened forelegs drove his hoofs hard upon the ground. That performance took place to the accompaniment of a series of snorts and guttural bellows. Suddenly it ceased. In a couple of leaps the great animal charged forward. With bristling neck and lowered head he hurled his full weight of more than a thousand pounds against his antagonist, who received the impact as best he could with outspread legs and swollen, stiffened neck.

With all their might and main the two strove again to force each other down. Again they failed. Suddenly unlocking horns, each tried to lunge at the other's unprotected side and deliver a fatal thrust. Both expressed their rage by loud and continuous snorting, grunting, and bellowing. Again and again they charged, but after battling for what seemed more than a quarter of an hour, neither had gained a decisive advantage. The southern bull, however, showed signs of weakening—he was the bull that bellowed loudest.

The northern bull, evidently the stronger, finding the other off guard for a moment, lurched forward and not only knocked the southern bull down, but leaped into the air to strike his enemy a smashing blow with his stiffened forelegs. The wounded moose, however, still rolling from the force of his fall, rolled completely over, and suddenly staggering to his feet, plunged into the lake and disappeared in the mist.

The victor, making no effort to follow, drew himself together, uttered a nasal, grunting sound that echoed far over the water, strode with slow and stately movements down along the beach, and was soon lost in the vapoury veil.

A JOURNEY TO THE WOODS

" 'Tis well for us poor denizens of earth
That God conceals the future from our gaze;
Or Hope, the blessed watcher on Life's tower,
Would fold her wings, and on the dreary waste
Close the bright eye that through the murky clouds
Of blank Despair still sees the glorious sun."

IT was a bright frosty morning when I bade adieu to the farm, the birth-place of my little Agnes, who, nestled beneath my cloak, was sweetly sleeping on my knee, unconscious of the long journey before us into the wilderness. The sun had not as yet risen. Anxious to get to our place of destination before dark, we started as early as we could. Our own fine team had been sold the day before for forty founds; and one of our neighbours, Mr. D—— was to convey us and our household goods to Douro for the sum of twenty dollars. During the week he had made several journeys with furniture and stores; and all that now remained was to be conveyed to the woods in two large lumber sleighs, one driven by himself, the other by a younger brother.

Our driver was a shrewd, clever man for his opportunities. He took charge of the living cargo, which consisted of my husband, our maid servant, the two little children and myself—besides a large hamper, full of poultry—a dog and a cat. The lordly sultan of the imprisoned seraglio thought fit to conduct himself in a very eccentric manner, for at every barnyard we happened to pass, he clapped his wings, and crowed so long and loud that it afforded great amusement to the whole party, and doubtless was very edifying to the poor hens, who lay huddled together as mute as mice.

"That 'ere rooster thinks he's on the top of the heap," said our driver, laughing. "I guess he's not used to travelling in a close conveyance. Listen! How all the crowers in the neighbourhood give him back a note of defiance! But he knows that he's safe enough at the bottom of the basket."

The day was so bright for the time of the year (the first week in February), that we suffered no inconvenience from the cold. Little Katy was enchanted with the jingling of the sleighbells, and, nestled among the packages, kept singing or talking to the horses in her baby lingo. Trifling as these little incidents were, before we had proceeded ten miles on our long journey, they revived my drooping spirits, and I began to feel a lively interest in the scenes through which we were passing.

The first twenty miles of the way was over hilly and well cleared country; and as in winter the deep snow fills up the inequalities, and makes all roads alike, we glided as swiftly and steadily along as if they had been the best highways in the world. Anon, the clearing began to diminish and tall woods arose on either side of the path; their solemn aspect, and the deep silence that brooded over their vast solitudes, inspiring the mind with a strange awe. Not a breath of wind stirred the leafless branches, whose huge shadows—reflected upon the dazzling white covering of snow—lay so perfectly still, that it seemed as if Nature had suspended her operations, that life and motion had ceased, and that she was sleeping in her winding-sheet, upon the bier of death.

"I guess you will find the woods pretty lonesome," said our driver, whose thoughts had been evidently employed on the same subject as our own. "We were once in the woods, but emigration has stepped ahead of us, and made our'n a cleared part of the country. When I was a boy, all this country, for thirty miles on every side of us, was bush land. As to Peterborough, the place was unknown; not a settler had ever passed through the great swamp, and some of them believed that it was the end of the world."

"What swamp is that?" I asked.

"Oh, the great Cavan swamp. We are just two miles from it; and I tell you that the

horses will want a good rest, and ourselves a good dinner, by the time we are through it. Ah! Mrs. Moodie, if ever you travel that way in summer, you will know something about corduroy roads. I was 'most jolted to death last fall; I thought it would have been no bad notion to have insured my teeth before I left C———. I really expected that they would have been shook out of my head before we had done manoeuvring over the big logs."

"How will my crockery stand it in the next sleigh?" quoth I. "If the road is such as you describe, I am afraid that I shall not bring a whole plate to Douro."

"Oh! the snow is a great leveller—it makes all rough places smooth. But with regard to this swamp I have something to tell you. About ten years ago no-one had ever seen the other side of it, and if pigs or cattle strayed away into it, they fell a prey to the wolves and bears, and were seldom recovered.

"An old Scotch emigrant, who had located himself on the side of it, so often lost his beasts that he determined during the summer season to try and explore the place, and see if there were any end to it. So he takes an axe on his shoulder, and a bag of provisions for a week, not forgetting a flask of whiskey, and off he starts all alone, and tells his wife that if he never returned, she and little Jock must try and carry on the farm without him; but he was determined to see the end of the swamp, even if it led to the other world. He fell

upon a fresh cattletrack which he followed all that day; and towards night he found himself in the heart of a tangled wilderness of bushes, and himself half eaten up with mosquitoes and black flies. He was more than tempted to give in and return home by the first glimpse of light.

"The Scotch are tough people; they are not easily daunted—a few difficulties only seem to make them more eager to get on; and he felt ashamed the next moment, as he told me, of giving up. So he finds out a large, thick cedar-tree for his bed, climbs up, and coiling himself among the branches like a bear, he was soon fast asleep.

"The next morning, by daylight, he continued his journey, not forgetting to blaze with his axe the trees to the right and left as he went along. The ground was so spongy and wet that at every step he plunged up to his knees in water, but he seemed no nearer the end of the swamp than he had been the day before. He saw several deer, a raccoon, and a ground-hog, during his walk, but was unmolested by bears or wolves. Having passed through several creeks and killed a great many snakes, he felt so weary towards the close of the second day, that he determined to go home the next morning. But just as he began to think his search was fruitless, he observed that the cedars and tamaracks which had obstructed his path became less numerous, and were succeeded by bass and soft

maple. The ground, also, became less moist, and he was soon ascending a rising slope, covered with oak and beech, which shaded land of the very best quality. The man was now fully convinced that he had cleared the great swamp, and that, instead of leading to the other world, it had conducted him to a country that would yield the very best returns for cultivation. His favourable report led to the formation of the road that we are about to cross, and to the settlement of Peterborough, which is one of the most promising new settlements in this district, and is surrounded by a splendid back country."

We were descending a very steep hill and encountered an ox sleigh, which was crawling slowly up it in a contrary direction. Three people were seated at the bottom of the vehicle upon straw, which made a cheap substitute for buffalo robes. Perched, as we were, upon the crown of the height, we looked completely down into the sleigh, and during the whole course of my life I never saw three uglier mortals collected into such a narrow space. The man was blear-eyed, with a hare-lip, through which protruded two dreadful yellow teeth that resembled the tusks of a boar. The woman was long-faced, high-cheek-boned, red-haired, and freckled all over like a toad. The boy resembled his hideous mother, but with the addition of a villainous obliquity of vision which rendered

him the most disgusting object in this singular trio.

As we passed them, our driver gave a knowing nod to my husband, directing, at the same time, the most quizzical glance towards the strangers, as he exclaimed, "We are in luck, sir! I think that 'ere sleigh may be called 'Beauty's egg-basket'!"

We made ourselves very merry at the poor people's expense, and Mr. D——, with his odd stories, and Yankeefied expressions, amused the tedium of our progress through the great swamp, which in summer presents, for several miles, one uniform bridge of rough and unequal logs, all laid loosely across huge sleepers, so that they jump up and down, when pressed by the wheels, like the keys of a piano. The rough motion and jolting occasioned by this collision is so distressing, that it never fails to entail upon the traveller sore bones and an aching head for the rest of the day. The path is so narrow over these logs that two waggons cannot pass without great difficulty, which is rendered more dangerous by the deep natural ditches on either side of the bridge, formed by broad creeks that flow out of the swamp and often terminate in mud-holes of very ominous dimensions. The snow, however, hid from us all the ugly features of the road, and Mr. D—— steered us through in perfect safety, and landed us at the door of a little log-house, which crowned the steep hill on the other side of the

swamp, and which he dignified with the name of a tavern.

It was now two o'clock. We had been on the road since seven and men, women, and children were all ready for the good dinner that Mr. D—— had promised us at this splendid house of entertainment, where we were destined to stay for two hours, to refresh ourselves and rest the horses.

"Well, Mrs. J——, what have you got for our dinner?" said our driver, after he had seen to the accommodation of his teams.

"Pritters* and pork, sir. Nothing else to be had in the woods. Thank God, we have enough of that."

I was very hungry but I felt no appetite for the dish she was preparing for us. It proved salt, hard and unsavoury.

D—— pronounced it very bad, and the whiskey still worse, with which he washed it down.

I asked for a cup of tea and a slice of bread. But they were out of tea, and the hop-rising had failed, and there was no bread in the house. For this disgusting meal we paid at the rate of a quarter of a dollar a head.

I was glad when, the horses being again put to, we escaped from the rank odour of the fried pork, and were once more in the fresh air.

*Vulgar Canadian for potatoes.

"Well mister; did you not grudge your money for that bad meat?" said D——, when we were once more seated in the sleigh. "But in these parts, the worse the fare the higher the charge."

"I would not have cared," said I, "if I could have got a cup of tea."

"Tea! it's poor trash. I never could drink tea in my life. But I like coffee, when 'tis boiled till it's quite black. But coffee is not good without plenty of trimmings."

"What do you mean by trimmings?"

He laughed, "Good sugar and sweet cream. Coffee is not worth drinking without trimmings."

Often in after years have I recalled the coffee trimmings, when endeavouring to drink the vile stuff which goes by the name of coffee in the houses of entertainment in the country.

We had now passed through the narrow strip of clearing which surrounded the tavern, and again entered upon the woods. It was near sunset, and we were rapidly descending a steep hill, when one of the traces that held our sleigh suddenly broke. D—— pulled up in order to repair the damage. His brother's team was close behind, and our unexpected standstill brought the horses upon us before J. D—— could stop them. I received so violent a blow from the head of one of them, just in the back of the neck, that for a few minutes I was stunned and insensible. When I recovered, I was supported in the arms of

my husband, over whose knees I was leaning, and D—— was rubbing my hands and temples with snow.

"There, Mr. Moodie, she's coming to. I thought she was killed. I have seen a man before now killed by a blow from a horse's head in like manner."

As soon as we could, we resumed our places in the sleigh; but all enjoyment of our journey, had it been otherwise possible, was gone.

When we reached Peterborough, Moodie wanted to remain at the inn all night, as we had still eleven miles of our journey to perform, and that through a blazed forest road, little travelled, and very much impeded by fallen trees and other obstacles; but D—— was anxious to get back as soon as possible to his own home, and he urged us very pathetically to proceed.

The moon arose during our stay at the inn, and gleamed upon the straggling farmhouses which then formed the now populous and thriving town of Peterborough. We crossed the wild, rushing, beautiful Otonabee River by a rude bridge, and soon found ourselves journeying over the plains or level heights beyond the village, which were thinly wooded with picturesque groups of oak and pine, and very much resembled a gentleman's park at home.

Far below, to our right, (for we were upon the Smithtown side) we heard the rushing of the river, whose rapid waters never receive

curb from the iron chain of winter. Even while the rocky banks are coated with ice, and the Frost-King suspends from every twig and branch the most beautiful and fantastic crystals, the black waters rush foaming along, a thick steam rising constantly above the rapids, as from a boiling pot. The shores vibrate and tremble beneath the force of the impetuous flood, as it whirls round cedar-clad islands and opposing rocks, and hurries on to pour its tribute into the Rice Lake, to swell the calm, majestic grandeur of the Trent, till its waters are lost in the beautiful Bay of Quinté, and finally merged in the blue ocean of Ontario.

The most renowned of our English rivers dwindle into little muddy rills when compared with the sublimity of the Canadian waters. No language can adequately express the solemn grandeur of her lake and river scenery; the glorious islands that float like visions from fairyland, upon the bosom of these azure mirrors of her cloudless skies. No dreary breadth of marshes, covered with flags, hides from our gaze the expanse of heavy-tinted waters; no foul mudbanks spread the unwholesome exhalations around. The rocky shores are crowned with the cedar, the birch, the alder, and soft maple that dip their long tresses in the pure stream; from every crevice in the limestone the harebell and Canadian rose wave their graceful blossoms.

The fiercest drought of summer may diminish the volume and power of these romantic streams, but it never leaves their rocky channel bare, nor checks the mournful music of their dancing waves.

Through the openings in the forest, we now and then caught the silver gleam of the river tumbling on in moonlight splendour, while the hoarse chiding of the wind in the lofty pines above us gave a fitting response to the melancholy cadence of the waters.

The children had fallen asleep. A deep silence pervaded the party. Night was above us with her mysterious stars. The ancient forest stretched around us on every side, and a foreboding sadness sunk upon my heart. Memory was busy with the events of many years. I retraced step by step the pilgrimage of my past life, until, arriving at this passage in the sombre history, I gazed through tears at the singularly savage scene around me, and secretly marvelled, "What brought me here?"

"Providence," was the answer which the soul gave. "Not for your own welfare, perhaps, but for the welfare of your children, the unerring hand of the great Father has led you here. You form a connecting link in the destinies of many. It is impossible for any human creature to live for himself alone. It may be your lot to suffer, but others will reap a benefit from your trials. Look up with confidence to Heaven, and the sun of

hope will yet shed a cheering beam through the forbidding depths of this tangled wilderness."

The road now became so bad that Mr. D—— was compelled to dismount and lead his horses through the more intricate passages. The animals themselves, weary with their long journey and heavy load, proceeded at footfall. The moon, too, had deserted us, and the only light we had to guide us through the dim arches of the forest was from the snow and the stars, which now peered down upon us, through the leafless branches of the trees, with uncommon brilliancy.

"It will be past midnight before we reach your brother's clearing" (where we expected to spend the night), said D——. "I wish, Mr. Moodie, we had followed your advice and stayed at Peterborough. How fares it with you, Mrs. Moodie, and the young ones? It is growing very cold."

We were now in the heart of a dark cedar swamp, and my mind was haunted with visions of wolves and bears; but beyond the long, wild howl of a solitary wolf, no other sound awoke the sepulchral silence of that dismal-looking wood.

"What a gloomy spot!" said I to my husband. "In the old country, superstition would people it with ghosts."

After clearing the low, swampy portion of the woods, with much difficulty, and the frequent application of the axe to cut away the

fallen timber that impeded our progress, our ears were assailed by a low, roaring, rushing sound, as of the falling of waters.

"That is Herriott's Falls," said our guide. "We are within two miles of our destination."

Oh, welcome sound! But those two miles appeared more lengthy than the whole journey. Thick clouds, that threatened a snowstorm, had blotted out the stars, and we continued to grope our way through a narrow, rocky path, upon the edge of the river, in almost total darkness. I now felt the chillness of the midnight hour and the fatigue of the long journey, with double force, and envied the servant and children, who had been sleeping ever since we left Peterborough. We now descended the steep bank and prepared to cross the rapids.

Dark as it was, I looked with a feeling of dread upon the foaming waters as they tumbled over their bed of rocks, their white crests, flashing, life-like, amid the darkness of the night.

"This is an ugly bridge over such a dangerous place," said D——, as he stood up in the sleigh and urged his tired team across the miserable, insecure log bridge, where darkness and death raged below, and one false step of his jaded horses would have plunged us into both. I must confess I drew a freer breath when the bridge was crossed,

and D—— congratulated us on our safe arrival at Douro.

We now continued our journey along the left bank of the river, but when in sight of Mr. S——'s clearing, a large pine-tree, which had fallen across the narrow path, brought the teams to a standstill.

The mighty trunk which had lately formed one of the stately pillars in the sylvan temple of Nature, was of too large dimensions to chop in two with axes; and after half an hour's labour, which to me, poor, cold, weary wight! seemed an age, the males of the party abandoned the task in despair. To go round it was impossible; its roots were concealed in an impenetrable wall of cedar jungle on the right hand side of the road, and its huge branches hung over the precipitous bank of the river.

"We must try and make the horses jump over it," said D——. "We may get an upset but there is no help for it; we must either make the experiment, or stay here all night, and I am too cold and hungry for that—so here goes!" He urged his horses to leap the log; restraining their ardour for a moment, as the sleigh rested on top of the formidable barrier, but so nicely balanced that the difference of a straw almost would have overturned the heavily-laden vehicle and its helpless inmates. We, however, cleared it in safety. He now stopped and gave directions to his brother to follow the same plan that

he had adopted; but whether the young man had less coolness, or the horses in his team were more difficult to manage, I cannot tell: the sleigh, as it hung poised upon the top of the log, was overturned with a loud crash, and all my household goods and chattels were scattered over the road.

Alas, for my crockery and stone china! scarcely one article remained unbroken.

"Never fret about the china," said Moodie, "thank God, the man and the horses are uninjured."

I should have felt more thankful had the crocks been spared too; for, like most of my sex, I had a tender regard for china, and I knew that no fresh supply could be obtained in this part of the world. Leaving his brother to collect the scattered fragments, D—— proceeded on his journey. We left the road and were winding our way over a steep hill, covered with heaps of brush and fallen timber, and as we reached the top, a light gleamed cheerily from the windows of a log house, and the next moment we were at my brother-in-law's door.

DOUR DAVIE'S DRIVE

PINNAGER was on snow-shoes, making a bee-line towards his field of saw-logs dark on the ice of Wolverine River. He crossed shanty roads, trod heaps of brush, forced his way through the tops of felled pines, jumped from little crags into seven feet of snow—Pinnager's men called him "a terror on snow-shoes." They never knew the direction from which he might come—an ignorance which kept them all busy with axe, saw, cant-hook and horses over the two square miles of forest comprising his "cut."

It was "make or break" with Pinnager. He had contracted to put on the ice all the logs he might make; for every one left in the woods he must pay stumpage and forfeit. Now his axemen had done such wonders that Pinnager's difficulty was to get his logs hauled out.

Teams were scarce that winter. The shanty was eighty miles from any settlement; ordinary teamsters were not eager to work for a small speculative jobber, who might or might not be able to pay in the spring. But Pinnager had some extraordinary teamsters, sons of farmers who neighboured him at

home, and who were sure he would pay them, though he should have to mortgage his land.

The time was late February; seven feet of snow, crusted, on the level; a thaw might turn the whole forest floor to slush; but if the weather should "hold hard" for six weeks longer, Pinnager might make and not break. Yet the chances were heavily against him.

Any jobber so situated would feel vexed on hearing that one of his best teams had suddenly been taken out of his service. Pinnager, crossing a shanty road with the stride of a moose, was hailed by Jamie Stewart with the news:

"Hey, boss, hold on! Davie McAndrews' leg's broke. His load slewed at the side hill, —log catched him against a tree."

"Where is he?" shouted Pinnager furiously.

"Carried him to shanty."

"Where are his horses?"

"Stable."

"Tell Aleck Dunbar to go get them out. He must take Davie's place—confound the lad's carelessness!"

"Davie says no; won't let any other man drive his horses."

"He won't? I'll show him!" and Pinnager made a bee-line for his shanty. He was choking with rage, all the more so because he knew that nothing short of breaking Davie McAndrew's neck would break Davie McAn-

drew's stubbornness, a reflection that cooled Pinnager before he reached the shanty.

The cook was busy about the caboose fire, getting supper for fifty-three devourers, when Pinnager entered the low door and made straight for one of the double tier of dingy bunks. There lay a youth of eighteen, with an unusual pallor on his weather-beaten face, and more than the usual sternness about his formidable jaw.

"What's all this, Davie? You sure the leg's broke? I'd 'a thought you old enough to take care."

"You would?" said Davie grimly. "And yourself not old enough to have yon piece of road mended—you that was so often told about it!"

"When you knew it was bad, the more you should take care."

"And that's true, Pinnager. But no use you an' me choppin' words. I'm needing a doctor's hands on me. Can you set a bone?"

"No, I'll not meddle with it. Maybe Jock Scott can; but I'll send you out home. A fine loss I'll be at! Confound it—and me like to break for want of teams."

"I've thocht o' yer case, Pinnager," said Davie, with a curious judicial air. "It's sore hard for ye; I ken that well. There's me and me feyther's horses gawn off, and you countin' on us. I feel for ye, so I do. But I'll not put you to any loss in sendin' me out."

"Was you thinking to tough it through here, Davie? No, you'll not chance it. Anyway, the loss would be the same—more, too. Why, if I send out for the doctor, there's a team off for full five days, and the expense of the doctor! Then he mightn't come. Wow, no! it's out you must go."

"What else!" said Davie, coolly. Would I lie here till spring and my leg mendin' into the Lord kens what-like shape? Would I be lettin' ony ither drive the horses my feyther entrusted to my lone? Would I be dependin' on Mr. Pinnager for keep, and me idle? Man, I'd eat the horse's head off that way; at home they'd be profit to my feyther. So it's me and them that starts at gray the morn's morn."

"Alone!" exclaimed Pinnager.

"Just that, man. What for no?"

"You're light-headed, Davie. A lad with his leg broke can't drive three days."

"Maybe yes and maybe no. I'm for it, onyhow."

"It may snow, it may—"

"Aye, or rain, or thaw, or hail; the Lord's no in the habit o' makin' weather suit ony but Himsel'. But I'm gawn; the cost of a man wi' me would eat the wages ye're owing my feyther."

"I'll lose his team anyhow," said Pinnager, "and me needing it bad. A driver with you could bring back the horses."

"Nay, my feyther will trust his beasts to nane but himsel' or his sons. But I'll have yer case in mind, Pinnager; it's a sore needcessity you're in. I'll ask my feyther to send back the team, and another to the tail of it; it's like that Tam and Neil will be home by now. And I'll spread word how you're needin' teams, Pinnager; it's like yer neighbours will send ye in sax or eight spans."

"Man, that's a grand notion, Davie! But you can't go alone; it's clean impossible."

"I'm gawn, Pinnager."

"You can't turn out in seven feet of snow when you meet loading. You can't water or feed your horses. There's forty miles the second day, and never a stopping-place; your horses can't stand it."

"I'm wae for the beasts, Pinnager; but they'll have no force but to travel dry and hungry if that's set for them."

"You're bound to go?"

"Div' you tak' me for an idjit to be talkin' and no meanin' it? Off wi' ye, man! The leg's no exactly a comfort when I'm talkin'."

"Why, Davie, it must be hurting you terrible!" Pinnager had almost forgotten the broken leg, such was Davie's composure.

"It's no exactly a comfort, I said. Get you gone, Pinnager; your men may be idlin'. Get you gone and send in Jock Scott, if he's man enough to handle my leg. I'm wearyin' just now for my ain company."

As Davie had made his programme, so it stood. His will was inflexible to protests. Next morning at dawn they set him on a hay-bed in his low, unboxed sleigh. A bag of oats supported his back; his unhurt leg was braced against a piece of plank spiked down. Jock Scott had pulled the broken bones into what he thought their place, and tied that leg up in splints of cedar.

The sleigh was enclosed by stakes, four on each side, all tied together by stout rope. The stake at Davie's right hand was shortened that he might hang his reins there. His water-bucket was tied to another stake, and his bag of provisions to a third. He was warm in a coonskin coat, and four pairs of blankets under or over him.

At the last moment Pinnager protested: "I must send a man to drive. It shan't cost you a cent, Davie."

"Thank you kindly, Pinnager," said Davie gravely. "I'll tell that to your credit at the settlement. But ye're needin' all your help, and I'd take shame to worsen your chances. My feyther's horses need no drivin' but my word."

Indeed, they would "gee," "haw," or "whoa" like oxen, and loved his voice. Round barrelled, deep-breathed, hardy, sure-footed, active, gentle, enduring, brave, and used to the exigencies of "bush roads" they would take him through safely, if horses' wit could.

Davie had uttered never a groan after those involuntary ones forced from him when the log, driving his leg against a tree, had made him almost unconscious. But the pain-sweat stood beaded on his face during the torture of carrying him to the sleigh. Not a sound from his lips, though! They could guess his sufferings from naught but his hard breathing through the nose, that horrible sweat, and the iron set of his jaw. After they had placed him, the duller agony that had kept him awake all night returned; he smiled grimly, and said: "That's a comfort."

He had eaten and drunk heartily; he seemed strong still; but what if his sleigh should turn over at some sidling place of the rude, lonely, and hilly forest road?

As Davie chirruped to his horses and was off, the men gave him a cheer; then Pinnager and all went away to labour fit for mighty men, and the swinging of axes and the crushing of huge pines and the tumbling of logs from rollways left them fancy-free to wonder how Davie could ever brace himself to save his broken leg at the *cahots*.

The terrible *cahots*—plunges in snow roads! But for them Davie would have suffered little more than in a shanty bunk. The track was mostly two smooth ruts separated by a ridge so high and hard that the sleigh bottom often slid on it. Horses less surefooted would have staggered much, and bitten crossly at one another while trotting in

those deep, narrow ruts, but Davie's horses kept their "jog" amiably, tossing their heads with glee to be travelling toward home.

The clink of trace-chains, the clack of harness, the glide of runners on the hard, dry snow, the snorting of the frosty-nosed team, the long whirring of startled grouse—Davie heard only these sounds, and heard them dreamily in the long, smooth flights between *cahots.*

Overhead the pine tops were a dark canopy with little fields of clear blue seen through the rifts of green; on the forest floor small firs bent under rounding weights of snow which often slid off as if moved by the stir of partridge wings; the fine tracery of hemlocks stood clean; and birches snuggled in snow that mingled with their curling rags. Sometimes a breeze eddied downward in the aisles, and then all the undergrowth was a silent commotion of snow, shaken and falling. Davie's eyes noted all things unconsciously; in spite of his pain he felt the enchantment of the winter woods until—another *cahot!* he called his team to walk.

Never was one *cahot* without many in succession; he gripped his stake hard at each, braced his sound leg and held on, feeling like to die with the horrible thrust of the broken one forward and then back; yet always his will ordered his desperate senses.

Eleven o'clock! Davie drew up before the half-breed Peter Whiteduck's mid-wood stopping-place, and briefly explained his situation.

"Give my horses a feed," he went on. "There's oats in this bag. I'll no be moved mysel'. Maybe you'll fetch me a tin of tea; I've got my own provisions." So he ate and drank in the zero weather.

"You'll took lil' drink of whiskey," said Peter, with commiseration, as Davie was starting away.

"I don't use it."

"You'll got need for some before you'll see de Widow Green place. Dass twenty-three mile."

"I will need it then," said Davie, and was away.

Evening had closed in when the bunch of teamsters awaiting supper at Widow Green's rude inn heard sleigh-bells, and soon a shout outside:

"Come out, someone!"

That was an insolence in the teamsters' code. Come out, indeed! The Widow Green, bustling about with fried pork, felt outraged. To be called out!—of her own house!—like a dog!—not she!

"Come out here, somebody!" Davie shouted again.

"G'out and break his head, one of you," said fighting Moses Frost. "To be shoutin' like a lord!" Moses was too great a personage to go out and wreak vengeance on an unknown.

Narcisse Larocque went—to thrash anybody would be glory for Narcisse, and he

felt sure that Moses would not, in these circumstances, let anybody thrash him.

"What for you shout lak' dat. Call mans hout, hey?" said Narcisse. "I'll got good mind for broke your head, me."

"Hi, there, men!" Davie ignored Narcisse, as he saw figures through the open door. "Some white man come out. My leg's broke."

Oh, then the up-jumping of big men! Moses, striding forth, ruthlessly shoved Narcisse, who lay and cowered with legs up as a dog trying to placate an angry master. Then Moses carried Davie in as gently as if the young stalwart had been a girl baby, and laid him on the widow's one spare bed.

That night Davie slept soundly for four hours, and woke to consciousness that his leg was greatly swollen. He made no moan, but lay in the darkness listening to the heavy breathing of the teamsters on the floor. They could do nothing for him; why should he awaken them? As for pitying himself, Davie could do nothing so fruitless. He fell to plans for getting teams in to Pinnager, for this young Scott's practical mind was horrified at the thought that the man should fail financially when ten horses might give him a fine profit for his winter's work.

Davie was away at dawn, every slight jolt giving his swollen leg pain almost unendurable, as if edges of living bone were grinding together and also tearing cavities in the liv-

ing flesh; but he must endure it, and well, too, for the teamsters had warned him he must meet "strings o' loading" this day.

The rule of the long, one-tracked road into the wilderness is, of course, that empty outgoing sleighs shall turn out for incoming laden ones. Turn out into seven feet of snow! Davie trusted that incoming teamsters would handle his floundering horses, and he set his mind to plan how they might save him from tumbling about on his turned out-sleigh.

About nine o'clock, on a winding road, he called "Whoa!" and his bays stood. A sleigh piled with baled hay confronted him thirty yards distant. Four others followed closely; the load drawn by the sixth team was hidden by the woodland curve. No teamsters were visible; they must be walking behind the procession; and Davie wasted no strength in shouting. On came the laden teams, till the steam of the leaders mingled with the clouds blown by his bays. At that halt, angry teamsters, yelling, ran forward and sprang one by one up on their loads, the last to grasp reins being the leading driver.

"Turn out, you fool!" he shouted. Then to his comrades behind, "There's a blamed idyit don't know enough to turn out for loading!"

Davie said nothing. It was not until one angry man was at his horses' heads and two more about to tumble his sleigh aside that he spoke.

"My leg is broke!"

"Gah! G'way! A man driving with his leg broke! You're lying! Come, get out and tramp down snow for your horses! It's your back ought to be broke—stopping loadin'!"

"My leg is broke," Davie calmly insisted.

"You mean it?"

Davie threw off his blankets.

"Begor, it is broke!" "And him drivin' himself!" "It's a terror!" "Great spunk entirely!" Then the teamsters began planning to clear the way.

That was soon settled by Davie's directions: "Tramp down the crust for my horses; onhitch them; lift my sleigh out on the crust; pass on; then set me back on the road."

Half an hour was consumed by the operation—thrice repeated before twelve o'clock. Fortunately, Davie came on the last "string" of teams halted for lunch by the edge of a lake. The teamsters fed and watered his horses, gave him hot tea, and with great admiration saw him start for an afternoon drive of twenty-two miles.

"You'll not likely meet any teams," they said. "The last of the 'loading' that's like to come in soon is with ourselves."

How Davie got down the hills, up the hills, across the rivers and over the lakes of that terrible afternoon he could never rightly tell.

"I'm thinkin' I was light-heided," he said afterward. "The notion was in me somehow that the Lord was lookin' to me to save

Pinnager's bits of children. I'd waken out of it at the *cahots*—there was mair than enough. On the smooth my head would be strange-like, and I mind but the hinder end of my horses till the moon was high and me stoppit by McGraw's."

During the night at McGraw's his head was cleared by some hours of sound sleep, and next morning he insisted on travelling, though snow was falling heavily.

"My feyther's place is no more than a bittock ayont twenty-eight miles," he said. "I'll make it by three of the clock, if the Lord's willin', and get the doctor's hands on me. It's my leg I'm thinkin' of savin'. And mind ye, McGraw, you've promised me to send in your team to Pinnager."

Perhaps people who have never risen out of bitter poverty will not understand Davie's keen anxiety about Pinnager and Pinnager's children; but the McAndrews and Pinnagers and all their neighbours of "the Scotch settlement", had won up by the tenacious labour and thrift of many years. Davie remembered well how, in his early boyhood, he had often craved more food and covering. Pinnager and his family should not be thrown back into the gulf of poverty if Davie McAndrew's will could save them.

This day his road lay through a country thinly settled, but he could see few cabins through the driving storm. The flagging horses trotted steadily, as if aware that the

road would become worse the longer they were on it, but about ten o'clock they inclined to stop where Davie could dimly see a long house and a shed with a team and sleigh standing in it. Drunken yells told him this must be Black Donald Donaldson's notorious tavern; so he chirruped his horses onward.

Ten minutes later yells and sleigh-bells were following him at a furious pace. Davie turned head and shouted; still the drunken men shrieked and came on. He looked for a place to turn out—none! He dared not stop his horses lest the gallopers, now close behind him, should be over him and his low sleigh. Now his team broke into a run at the noises, but the fresh horses behind sped faster. The men were hidden from Davie by their crazed horses. He could not rise to appeal; he could not turn to daunt the horses with his whip; their front hoofs, rising high, were soon within twenty feet of him. Did his horses slacken, the others would be on top of him, kicking and tumbling.

The *cahots* were numerous; his yells for a halt became so much like screams of agony that he took shame of them, shut his mouth firmly, and knew not what to do. Then suddenly his horses swerved into the cross-road to the Scotch settlement, while the drunkards galloped away on the main road, still lashing and yelling. Davie does not know to this day who the men were.

Five hours later David McAndrews, the elder, kept at home by the snowstorm, heard bells in his lane, and looked curiously out of the sitting-room window.

"Losh, Janet!" he said most deliberately. "I wasna' expeckin' Davie; here he's back with the bays."

He did not hurry out to meet his fourth son, for he is a man who hates the appearance of haste; but his wife did, and came rushing back through the kitchen.

"It's Davie himsel'! He's back wi' his leg broke! He's come a' the way by his lone!"

"Hoot-toot, woman! Ye're daft!"

"I'm no daft; come and see yoursel'. Wae's me, my Davie's like to die! Me daft, indeed! Ye'll need to send Neil straight awa' to the village for Doctor Aberdeen."

And so dour Davie's long drive was past. When his brother carried him in, his will was occupied with the torture, but he had scarcely been laid on his bed when he said, very respectfully—but faintly—to his father:

"You'll be sendin' Neil oot for the doctor, sir? Aye; then I'd be thankfu' if you'd give Aleck leave to tak' the greys and warn the settlement that Pinnager's needin' teams sorely. He's like to make or break; if he gets sax or eight spans in time he's a made man."

That was enough for the men of the Scotch settlement. Pinnager got all the men he need-

ed; and yet he is far from as rich to-day as Davie McAndrews, the great Brazeau River lumberman, who walks a little lame of his left leg.

THE FRENCH CANADIAN MAKES LAND

AFTER a few chilly days, June suddenly brought veritable spring weather. A blazing sun warmed field and forest, the lingering patches of snow vanished even in the deep shade of the woods; the Peribonka rose and rose between its rocky banks until the alders and the roots of the near spruces were drowned; in the roads the mud was incredibly deep. The Canadian soil rid itself of the last traces of winter with a semblance of mad haste, as though in dread of another winter already on the way.

Esdras and Da'Bé returned from the shanties where they had worked all the winter. Esdras was the eldest of the family, a tall fellow with a huge frame, his face bronzed, his hair black; the low forehead and prominent chin gave him a Neronian profile, domineering, not without a suggestion of brutality; but he spoke softly, measuring his words, and was endlessly patient. In face alone had he anything of the tyrant; it was as though the long rigours of the climate and the fine sense and good humour of the race had refined his heart to a simplicity and kind-

liness that his formidable aspect seemed to deny.

Da'Bé, also tall, was less heavily built, and more lively and merry. He was like his father.

The married couple had given their first children, Esdras and Maria, fine, high-sounding, sonorous names; but they had apparently wearied of these solemnities, for the next two children never heard their real names pronounced: always had they been called by the affectionate diminutives of childhood, Da'Bé and Tit'Bé. With the last pair, however, there had been a return to the earlier ceremonious manner:—Telesphore. . . . . Alma Rose.

"When the boys get back, we are going to make land," the father had promised. And, with the help of Edwige Légaré, their hired man, they set about the task. . . .

Edwige Légaré had worked for the Chapdelaines these eleven summers. That is to say, for wages of twenty dollars a month he was in harness each day from four in the morning till nine at night at any and every job that called for doing, bringing to it a sort of frenzied and inexhaustible enthusiasm; for he was one of those men incapable by his nature of working save at the full pitch of strength and energy, in a series of berserk rages. Short and broad, his eyes were the brightest blue—a thing rare in Quebec—at once piercing and guileless, set in a visage

the colour of clay that always showed cruel traces of the razor, topped by hair of nearly the same shade. With a pride in his appearance that was hard to justify he shaved himself two or three times a week, always in the evening, before the bit of looking-glass that hung over the pump, and by the feeble light of the little lamp—driving the steel through his stiff beard with groans that showed what it cost him in labour and anguish. Clad in shirt and trousers of brownish homespun, wearing huge dusty boots, he was from head to heel of a piece with the soil, nor was there aught in his face to redeem the impression of rustic uncouthness.

Chapdelaine, his three sons and man, proceeded then to "make land." The forest still pressed hard upon the buildings they had put up a few years earlier: the little square house, the barn of planks that gaped apart, the stable built of blackened logs and chinked with rags and earth. Between the scanty fields of their clearing and the darkly encircling woods, lay a broad stretch which the axe had but half-heartedly attacked. A few living trees had been cut for timber, and the dead ones, sawn and split, fed the great stove for a whole winter; but the place was a rough tangle of stumps and interlacing roots, of fallen trees too far rotted to burn, of others dead but still erect amid the alder scrub.

Thither the five men made their way one morning and set to work at once, without a

word, for every man's task had been settled beforehand.

The father and Da'Bé took their stand face to face on either side of a tree, and their axes, helved with birch, began to swing in rhythm. At first each hewed a deep notch, chopping steadily at the same spot for some seconds, then the axe rose swiftly and fell obliquely in the trunk a foot higher up; at every stroke a great chip flew, thick as the hand, splitting away with the grain. When the cuts were nearly meeting, one stopped and the other slowed down, leaving his axe in the wood for a moment at every blow; the mere strip, by some miracle, still holding the tree erect, yielded at last; it began to lean and the two axemen stepped back a pace and watched it fall, shouting at the same instant a warning of the danger.

It was then the turn of Edwige Légaré and Esdras; when the tree was not too heavy, each took an end, clasping their strong hands beneath the trunk, and then raised themselves —backs straining, arms cracking under the stress—and carried it to the nearest heap with short unsteady steps, getting over the fallen trees with stumbling effort. When the burden seemed too heavy, Tit'Bé came forward leading Charles Eugene dragging a tug-bar with a strong chain; this was passed round the trunk and fastened, the horse bent his back, and with the muscles of his hind-quarters standing out, hauled away the tree

which scraped along the stumps and crushed the young alders to the ground.

At noon Maria came out to the door-step and gave a long call to tell them that dinner was ready. Slowly they straightened up among the stumps, wiping away with the backs of their hands the drops of sweat that ran into their eyes, and made their way to the house.

Already the pea-soup smoked in the plates. The five men set themselves at table without haste, as if sensation were somewhat dulled by the heavy work; but as they caught their breath a great hunger awoke, and soon they began to eat with keen appetite. The two women waited upon them, filling the empty plates, carrying about the great dish of pork and boiled potatoes, pouring out the hot tea. When the meat had vanished, the diners filled their saucers with molasses in which they soaked large pieces of bread; hunger was quickly appeased, because they had eaten fast and without a word, and then plates were pushed back and chairs tilted with sighs of satisfaction, while hands were thrust into pockets for their pipes, and the pigs' bladders bulging with tobacco.

Edwige Légaré, seating himself upon the doorstep, proclaimed two or three times:— "I have dined well. . . . I have dined well. . . ." with the air of a judge who renders an impartial decision; after which he leaned against the post, and let the smoke of his pipe

and the gaze of his small light-coloured eyes pursue the same purposeless wanderings. The elder Chapdelaine sank deeper and deeper into his chair, and ended by falling asleep; the others smoked and chatted about their work.

"If there is anything," said the mother, "which could reconcile me to living so far away in the woods, it is seeing my men-folk make a nice bit of land—a nice bit of land that was full of trees and stumps and roots, which one beholds in a fortnight as bare as the back of your hand, ready for the plough; surely nothing in the world can be more pleasing or better worth doing." The rest gave assent with nods, and were silent for awhile, admiring the picture. Soon, however, Chapdelaine awoke, refreshed by his sleep and ready for work; then all arose and went out together.

The place where they had worked in the morning was still full of stumps and overgrown with alders. They set themselves to cutting and uprooting the alders, gathering a sheaf of branches in the hand, and severing them with the axe, or sometimes digging the earth away about the roots and tearing up the whole bush together. The alders disposed of, there remained the stumps.

Légaré and Esdras attacked the smaller ones with no weapons but their axes and stout wooden prizes. They first cut the roots spreading on the surface, then drove a lever

well home, and, chests against the bar, threw all their weight upon it. When their efforts could not break the hundred ties binding the tree to the soil, Légaré continued to bear heavily that he might raise the stump a little, and while he groaned and grunted under the strain, Esdras hewed away furiously level with the ground, severing one by one of the remaining roots.

A little distance away the other three men handled the stumping-machine with the aid of Charles Eugene. The pyramidal scaffolding was put in place above a large stump and lowered, the chains which were then attached to the root passed over a pulley, and the horse at the other end started away quickly, flinging himself into the collar and showering earth with his hoofs. A short and desperate charge, a mad leap often arrested after a few feet as by the stroke of a giant fist; then the heavy steel blades would swing up anew, gleaming in the sun, and fall with a dull sound upon the stubborn wood, while the horse took breath for a moment, awaiting with excited eye the word that would launch him forward again. And afterwards there was still the labour of hauling or rolling the big stumps to the pile—at fresh effort of back, of soil stained hands with swollen veins, and stiffened arms that seemed grotesquely striving with the heavy trunk and the huge twisted roots

The sun dipped toward the horizon, disappeared; the sky took on softer hues above the forest's dark edge, and the hour of supper brought to the house five men of the colour of the soil.

While waiting upon them Madame Chapdelaine asked a hundred questions about the day's work, and when the vision arose before her of this patch of land they had cleared, superbly bare, lying ready for the plough, her spirit was possessed with something of a mystic's rapture.

With hands upon her hips, refusing to seat herself at table, she extolled the beauty of the world as it existed for her: not the beauty wherein human beings have no hand, which the townsman makes such an ado about with his unreal ecstacies—mountains lofty and bare, wild seas—but the quiet, unaffected loveliness of the level champaign, finding its charm in the regularity of the long furrow, and the sweetly flowing stream—the naked champaign courting with willing abandon the fervent embraces of the sun.

She sang the great deeds of the four Chapdelaines and Edwige Légaré, their struggle against the savagery of nature, their triumph of the day. She awarded praises and displayed her own proper pride, albeit the five men smoked their wooden or clay pipes in silence, motionless as images after their long task; images of earthy hue, hollow-eyed with fatigue.

"The stumps are hard to get out," at length said the elder Chapdelaine, "the roots have not rotted in the earth so much as I should have imagined. I calculate that we shall not be through for three weeks." He glanced questioningly at Légaré who gravely confirmed him.

"Three weeks . . . . Yes, confound it! That is what I think too."

They fell silent again, patient and determined, like men who face a long war.

The Canadian spring had but known a few weeks of life when, by calendar, the summer was already come; it seemed as if the local weather god had incontinently pushed the season forward with august finger to bring it again into accord with more favoured lands to the south. For torrid heat fell suddenly upon them, heat well-nigh as unmeasured as was the winter's cold. The tops of the spruces and cypresses, forgotten by the wind, were utterly still, and above the frowning outline stretched a sky bare of cloud which likewise seemed fixed and motionless. From dawn till nightfall a merciless sun calcined the ground.

The five men worked on unceasingly, while from day to day the clearing extended its borders by a little; deep wounds in the uncovered soil showed the richness of it.

Maria went forth one morning to carry them water. The father and Tit'Bé were cutting alders, Da'Bé and Esdras piling the

cut trees. Edwige Légaré was attacking a stump by himself; a hand against the trunk, he had grasped a root with the other, as one seizes the leg of some gigantic adversary in a struggle, and he was fighting the combined forces of wood and earth like a man furious at the resistance of an enemy. Suddenly the stump yielded and lay upon the ground; he passed a hand over his forehead and sat down upon the root, running with sweat, overcome by the exertion. When Maria came near him with her pail half full of water, the others having drunk, he was still seated, breathing deeply and saying in a bewildered way:—"I am done for. . . . Ah, I am done for." But he pulled himself together on seeing her, and roared out:——"Cold water! Perdition! Give me cold water."

Seizing the bucket he drank half its contents and poured the rest over his head and neck; still dripping, he threw himself afresh upon the vanquished stump and began to roll it towards a pile as one carries off a prize.

Maria stayed for a few moments looking at the work of the men and the progress they had made, each day more evident, then hied her back to the house swinging the empty bucket, happy to feel herself alive and well under the bright sun, dreaming of all the joys that were to be hers, nor could be long delayed if only she were earnest and patient enough in her prayers.

Even at a distance the voices of the men

came to her across the ground baked by the heat; Esdras, his hands beneath a young jack pine was saying in his quiet tones:—"Gently . . . . together now!"

Légaré was wrestling with some new inert foe, and swearing in his half-stifled way:—"Perdition! I'll make you stir, so I will." His gasps were nearly as audible as the words. Taking breath for a second, he rushed once more into the fray, arms straining, wrenching with his great back. And yet again his voice was raised in oaths and lamentations:—"I tell you that I'll have you. . . . Oh, you rascal! Isn't it hot? . . . I'm pretty nearly finished . . . ." His complaints ripened into one mighty cry:—"Boss! We are going to kill ourselves making land."

Old Chapdelaine's voice was husky but still cheerful as he answered: "Tough! Edwige, tough! The pea soup will soon be ready."

And in truth it was not long before Maria, once more on the doorstep, shaping her hands to carry the sound, sent forth the ringing call to dinner.

Toward evening a breeze arose and a delicious coolness fell upon the earth like a pardon. But the sky remained cloudless.

"If the fine weather lasts," said Mother Chapdelaine, "the blueberries will be ripe for the feast of Ste. Anne."

WORK

ONCE there lived a man and his wife who had tilled the soil all their lives and now were getting on in years.

What a deal of work old Anselme Letiec and his wife Catherine had faced together since the day when they settled in the fifth concession of the parish, the last concession of the Seigniory! After their wedding, Anselme had brought Catherine thither, almost into the woods. She was eighteen and he twenty-one. They set to it forthwith; and forty long years, in fair weather and foul, through winters and summers, rain and snow and sunshine, they had toiled unceasingly.

At the start they had to thrust the crowding forest from their door, to fell great trees, to clear the land of stumps and stones; then came the first heavy breaking of new soil, the prolonged and stubborn battle with indocile nature; and later, on their broadening fields, the drudgery without surcease in scorching suns and cutting winds. Anselme had shaped his own domain with ax and plough-share, made it fruitful with the sweat of his brow. For nigh on half a century he had won a living from it by the strength of his good arms, and the unwavering Catherine had ever stood by his side and taken

her full share. Farm and house smiled and prospered under their hands, busy from morn till night.

Misfortunes had come; the lightning burned his barn with a year's harvest; hail mowed down a crop; grasshoppers ravaged his fields; a sickness beyond cure took toll of his flock; death crossed his threshold. But no ill-happening overtried the patient goodness of these simple-hearted Christians, for prayer taught their spirits how to endure, and the very busyness of their days wrought consolation in grief.

Many children were born to them; brightening the home in turn with laughter and play; growing up to share the daily task; one by one passing from the father's roof. The eldest had been sent to college and was now a priest. Anselme and Catherine nightly rendered thanks to God for this blessing accorded them. Two sons were dead, and sorely the parents had wept them. Thanks to an industry that never slackened, to life-long frugality, they had been able to establish the other boys on good farms, and the girls were well married.

Anselme and Catherine, now alone on the place, were getting old; and the thought came back to them—to Anselme chiefly—that once they had dreamed a dream.

And their dream was that one day they would live in independence.

It began a long time ago. Quite as a boy Anselme used to wonder how certain of the villagers never had anything to do but to smoke their pipes in the sun, chat with passers-by, offer an opinion upon the weather or the chances of the next harvest.

'They live on their savings,' his father told him; and he had discovered later that there were retired farmers who had sold their farms and were ending their peaceful days on small incomes.

These reposeful old people, sitting on their door-steps with no care in the world but to eat and sleep, had always lingered in Anselme's mind as the picture of earth's profoundest happiness—a picture which inspired him now.

So long had he talked about it that Catherine had given up objecting; even did she appear to share his aspiration, but without the same keenness, and rather to gratify his wish than her own.

And, to record the exact truth, Anselme himself had not of late been setting great store by his youthful vision; yet, when life pressed him hardest, it was a pleasant enough thought that some time, his toils ended, the wherewithal might be scraped together to buy a little place in the village where they would round out their lives. For many a long year some such hope had been sleeping in the back of his mind.

Now the hour was come for turning the dream into reality. Anselme had been seriously debating the matter ever since the marriage of his last daughter. He was still hearty and strong, but he felt as though a little rest would be uncommonly welcome. The sale of farm and stock would yield a sum well answering his purpose. It chanced at the moment that a cottage with a tiny garden was to let just by the church. How happy they might be there!—No round of morning and evening chores, no more beasts to care for, fields to plough, hay to cut, crops to house, wheat to thresh. Nothing but a little easy housekeeping and cooking. They could sleep on in the mornings and get up exactly when they pleased. All day long they would rock on the verandah and watch the people passing. Nothing was to hinder a little game of Queens or Four Sevens with the neighbours of an evening. So would they live, peaceful and content, awaiting God's good time. . . . For they would have never another thing to do; they would be people living on their private means!

'Suppose, Catherine,' said Anselme one day, 'suppose that we were to sell out?'

'As you think best,' answered Catherine, 'but . . .'

Now the word 'but' on Catherine Letiec's lips was apt to betoken a weighty reservation.

'*But* what?' asked Anselme.

She pursued her thought:—'It was a nice idea to have in mind, old man, that the day would come when we should be able to live on our savings; but now that we really have to decide, something tells me that perhaps it will not be just as pleasant as it sounds. Do you want to know what I think? . . . Well, I am afraid we may be sorry.'

'*Afraid we may be sorry!* Aren't you joking, my old woman? What sort of a life have we led together these forty years?—up at dawn, and breathless and sweating over our work till black night. Here we are, bent and heavy of foot with everlasting tilling of the earth and carrying of loads. My hands are like horn and yours are all cracked. Forty years have we been hard at it from New Year's morning till New Year's eve; surely that ought to be enough; surely we have won the right to rest a little! And then —think of it—we shall be only half a dozen steps from the church; you will be able to go to mass every day—I could, too.'

They talked it over for a long while and in the end Catherine gave way—persuaded, or seemingly persuaded. At any rate they resolved to sell.

The notary they consulted took the matter up and declared he could find a purchaser—even had one in mind. Old Maxime Bellefeuille was anxious to settle his son in the neigbourhood and had the requisite cash.

After enquiries made on both sides, it appeared that the land suited old Bellefeuille who would give a handsome price, but that he did not wish to buy the rather out of date farm-gear. Furthermore the old gentleman wanted a little more time and would take a month to think it over.

'A matter of no consequence,' declared the notary, 'you are not in a hurry, Mr. Letiec. Should Bellefeuille not come to terms I can easily find you another purchaser. Such a farm as yours is always saleable at a good figure.'

'When Mr. Bellefeuille has made up his mind you will be careful, sir, to draw up the proper papers for us, securing the income to the good wife and me for our lives, and the capital to our children in the way I told you.'

'Don't be alarmed, Mr. Letiec, your papers shall be perfectly in order.'

'Everything must be straight, and no loopholes.'

'You can rely on me.'

Before leaving, Anselme put it to the notary:—'Since old Bellefeuille doesn't want my gear, is there any reason against selling it in the meantime?'

'You may sell in the meantime,' counselled the man of the law.

And so, whilst awaiting the disposition of the land, Anselme sold. Partly by auction, partly by private sale, everything was clear-

ed off: cattle, vehicles, implements, furniture. Anselme and Catherine kept only the few things they needed to furnish their cottage in the village.

The sale lasted all day. A notice given from the church steps on the preceding Sunday brought many bidders. In house and barn, in stable and yard, there was such a hubbub for hours that you could not hear yourself speak.

When evening came at last, and everyone had paid for his purchase and carried it off, Anselme and Catherine found themselves alone.

After supping, they counted up what the sale had brought in. No longer had they a head of cattle, nor so much as a hayfork, but a goodly pile of fifty-cent pieces and quarters lay before them on the kitchen table. Anselme found that the reckoning was beyond all his hopes.

'Just look at that,' he said, stuffing his spectacles into the case. 'Never should I have believed the things would fetch so much. Catherine, my old woman, we are moneyed folk already! Not a thing to be done tomorrow! And in a month the land will be sold and we shall go to live in the village!'

But Catherine answered never a word. She swept together the coins, locked them in the cupboard and tidied up the table.

Anselme was delighted at this splendid beginning. He seated himself on the front

steps, lit his pipe and forthwith took up his tale:—'To-morrow, not a thing to be done! Pretty hard to believe. A long day since anything like that has happened to us, my old woman. Come along and sit down and watch the sunset.'

The sun hung low over the woods, and its level rays lighted the furrowed faces and whitening hair of these two peasants who were leaving their land.

Silent a while, Catherine spoke:—'It was hard to see our old plough go.'

'It brought three dollars!'

'You ploughed the sou'west field with it for the first crop we ever sowed. You remember? The year that Jean was born.'

'A long time ago, that.'

'The share is sound yet,' she answered.

Another silence, drawn out. They were thinking of the old plough which had given service for so many years—and now was sold.

It was Catherine who spoke first:—'I am glad that France Villeneuve bought White Nose. His wife is kind to beasts. She will take good care of her.'

'White Nose is a fine cow.'

'The best in our herd . . . Maybe we should have done better to keep her . . .'

'But why?' Anselme breaks in. 'There would be the feeding, caring for, milking. You have had enough of that in your time; you are going to have a rest.'

The husband has let his pipe go out; the wife, chin in hands, keeps her unseeing eyes on the meeting of earth and sky.

Anselme at length, half to himself:—'Neighbour Ladouceur bought Grizzle.'

'A clever mare,' murmurs Catherine.

'Age and all, there isn't a mare to touch her with a heavy load.'

'Nor one able to plough a straighter furrow. She has a natural gift.'

'Perhaps we could have held on to her,' Anselme half audibly admitted.

'She fetched seventy-five dollars,' was Catherine's comment.

With a sudden movement Anselme knocks the ashes out of his pipe. 'Let's go to bed,' says he. But after the evening prayer he still wanders aimlessly about the kitchen, opens the door again, goes out on the step, stares through the gloom towards the outbuildings at this his usual hour for a last tour of inspection. He halts, irresolute; turns and enters the house, muttering to himself:—'What does it matter! We are our own masters now, and to-morrow I sleep till seven o'clock!'

And in the morning he awoke at four.

The sun's rays were striking full into the room. Anselme's first impression was that he had overslept himself, and he is about to leap out of bed when suddenly he remembers. Not a thing to be done! He can laze in bed all morning if he has a mind. The

luxury of it! He decides for slumber; but finds it vain to turn over and back, to tell himself he is now a man of leisure, to say again and again that it is all quite true—not a one of his customary tasks standing undone. Sleep does not come. He closes his eyes, but the clear daylight comes redly through the lids. Wishful to think of nothing whatever, he cannot put away that picture of Ladouceur leading off Grizzle with hanging head. . . . No use trying to sleep, and the attempt is boring and tiresome. So up he jumps.

'Awake already?' asks Catherine.

'What!' says Anselme, 'you awake too?'

'For quite a good while, but I thought you were going to sleep late and I didn't want to disturb you.'

'Such a fine morning that I feel like having a mouthful of fresh air.'

'You might as well; there is nothing for you to do.'

'I was just thinking that.'

Anselme went off to his barns and byres. A far-away cock was crowing and his neighbour's oxen lowed; but everything with him was untenanted and silent. Not a fowl in the yard, a cow in the pen, a horse in the stable. He heard a neighing from time to time over at Ladouceur's. Could that be Grizzle—Grizzle home-sick for her old stable?

The door of the hen-house stood open. Anselme kept gazing at the vacant coop and the bare perches for a long while, as though there was something in it all too deep for him.

No more than a glance did he cast into the cow-shed; it looked so dismal with the unoccupied stalls, the empty racks and mangers, that he lacked heart to put foot across the threshold.

The threshing-floor in the barn was littered with hay. Anselme searched in every corner, but there was neither rake nor fork to tidy up the place.

The drive-way into the barn gave a wide prospect across the fields to the distant line of woods and sky. The spring sowing was about finished and the new owner would reap the benefit. A single field was yet unploughed; but never a plough nor a harrow remained on the farm, not a scythe for the crop, not a cradle for the harvesting!

Well, what of it? Things are as they should be. People who are going to live in a village have got past the need of such tools. And, anyway, the land itself and everything on it will belong to someone else . . .

Anselme had the feeling this morning that he was seeing his fields and meadows for the first time.

He bethought himself of much that had happened in old days. Hereabouts, he had felled his first tree—a pine like a steeple

for straightness and height—and the next year had made out of it the king-posts of his barn.

Over yonder, where the land is now uncultivated, his second son Joseph had learned to plough.

Beyond that again he saw the upper pasture-field. A job to get the stones out of that! Catherine, who did a man's work, ricked her back there so badly that she had to keep her bed for a full month.

A spring of beautiful water, cold and clear, gushes out by the edge of the wood.

A fine property to be master of and he and Catherine made it what it is. No sod of earth upon it they had not turned and turned again with their own hands. Verily they had toiled long and hard, but the soil had given recompense. What countless trusses of hay and sheaves of wheat had they not harvested and lodged in barn!

Yes, and in a month the farm would be another's . . .

It was a sad and sober Anselme who made his way back to the house.

While Catherine was putting things to rights after breakfast a whinnying came faintly to their ears.

'I am going to stroll over Ladouceur's way,' said Anselme.

Wife looks at husband as he departs, and one who knew no better might have said that her wrinkles half hid a smile. Off with her

apron, on with her hat, and she, too, takes to the high road. Can it be possible that she is bound for France Villeneuve's?

An hour later, Anselme Letiec is on the way back from his call on neighbour Ladouceur; but what in the world does this mean? In his hand a halter, at the end of the halter —Grizzle!

Entering the stable he hears his wife say, 'Come up! White Nose.'

He stares. If that woman Catherine hasn't been and fetched White Nose! While he was after the mare she went after the cow.

Quite as usual, Grizzle marches in by herself and takes her place in the stall beside White Nose. She lifts her good old head over the partition with a little whinny of joy, while White Nose chews her cud in great content. The beasts make it plain enough, each in her way, that they are glad to find one another again and to be at home.

The shame-faced couple stood gazing and tongue-tied. Catherine was the first to find her wits:

'I thought that while we were waiting to move into the village it would be nice to have a drop of milk, and I asked France to let us keep White Nose for a month. Milking her and looking after her will be a little distraction for me.'

'Ye-es. What struck me was that it wouldn't be half a bad idea to plough that

nor'-easterly field before we sold. Ladouceur has lent me Grizzle for a month.'

'But you haven't got a plough!'

'I should have told you about that: I –I borrowed one.'

'And when you have finished your ploughing, what will you be doing with Grizzle for a whole month?'

Anselme had no answer at the tip of his tongue. At last he got out:—'Always odd jobs of carting; something to do will help pass the time.'

'As you think best,' Catherine said sweetly.

A peasant and his wife who are used to be at it all day make short work of ploughing a field and caring for a cow. Morning by morning, one or the other of them found an excuse for borrowing a cart, a tool, a farm implement for some purpose. The stable had to be cleaned up, a panel of the fence needed mending, the garden cried out for weeding; if it wasn't this it was the other.

But these stop-gap tasks were only a pretence without real interest for them. Anselme and Catherine drifted through idle and aimless days of vague discontent, wondering what their hands might find to do. Life was tedious as a lenten fast.

Two dull sad weeks dragged by. Anselme had never a laugh left in him, and half the time Catherine was crying quietly into her apron—these two whose vigorous old age

had been so bright and happy. Yet neither of them could pluck up courage to confess.

An evening came at last, after a day of crushing idleness that weighed them to the earth, when Anselme could endure no longer and must speak.

'I begin to doubt, Catherine, whether we-folk are made for this life of leisure. Say what you like and do what you like, we are happier working.'

Catherine heaved the deep sigh of joy which comes when one has awaited something that long has tarried. But first she must be very sure how her husband's mind is shaping, and she answers warily:—'Is it not too soon yet to know, my dear Anselme? In a fortnight the land will be sold and we shall be living in the village. Possibly things will go better then.'

'The land will be sold . . . The land will be sold . . . It is not sold yet! Certainly the land will be sold, if I am willing to sell it! Look here, Catherine; do you want to know what I think? . . . Well, I am afraid we may be sorry.'

'The sale is not made—as you were just saying. We might hold on to the farm . . . Of course, then, we could not live on our income.'

'But we would be staying here; we would keep Grizzle . . .'

'We would keep White Nose.'

'We might buy back some of our farm-

gear . . . What do you think about it all, old lady?'

'You may take it for granted that we shall be happy—we were before,' said Catherine. 'You see, old man, there seems to have been one thing we dropped out of mind—that the good God never put us upon the land with the idea that we should live on our savings.'

'We ought to talk to Monsieur le Curé before deciding anything.'

'I feel certain that he will be against our selling.'

'My notion, Catherine, is that we went into this whole affair thoughtlessly, without proper consideration. Why, will you tell me, should we give up our farm? My legs are still good, and my eyes!'

'That last bee, over at the Cormiers', not one of the young folks could keep up with you.'

'Let us buy a new outfit for the farm!' broke out Anselme.

'As you think best,' answers the submissive Catherine.

And they smiled and they chuckled, happy again for the first time in a fortnight.

Anselme was at the village betimes in the morning.

'Mr. Notary,' said he, 'you need not bother any more about selling that farm of mine; I'm going to keep it.'

And by way of excusing his change of mind he added:—'It's altogether too tiring for me, this business of doing nothing.'

THE FRUITS OF TOIL

HOW the wilderness, savage and remote, yields to the strength of men. A generation strips it of tree and rock, a generation tames it and tills it, a generation passes into the evening shadows as into rest in a garden, and thereafter the children of that place possess it in peace and plenty, through succeeding generations, without end, and shall to the end of the world. But the sea is tameless: as it was in the beginning, it is now, and shall ever be—mighty, savage, dread, infinitely treacherous and hateful, yielding only that which is wrested from it, snarling, raging, snatching lives, spoiling souls of their graces. The tiller of the soil sows in peace, and in a yellow, hazy peace he reaps; he passes his hand over a field, and, lo, in good season he gathers a harvest, for the earth rejoices to serve him. The deep is not thus subdued; the toiler of the sea—the Newfoundlander of the upper shore—is born to conflict, ceaseless and deadly, and, in the dawn of all the days, he puts forth anew to wage it, as his father did, and his father's father, and as his children must, and his children's children, to the last of them; nor from day to day can he foresee the issue, nor

from season to season foretell the worth of the spoil, which is what chance allows. Thus laboriously, precariously, he slips through life: he follows hope through the toilsome years; and past summers are a black regret and bitterness to him, but summers to come are all rosy with new promise.

Long ago, when young Luke Dart, the Boot Bay trader, was ambitious for Shore patronage, he said to Solomon Stride, of Ragged Harbour, a punt fisherman: "Solomon, b'y, an you be willin', I'll trust you with twine for a cod-trap. An you trade with me, b'y, I'll trade with you, come good times or bad." Solomon was young and lusty, a mighty youth in bone and seasoned muscle, lunged like a blast furnace, courageous and finely sanguine. Said he: "An you trust me with twine for a trap, skipper, I'll deal fair by you, come good times or bad. I'll pay for un, skipper, with the first fish I cotches." Said Luke Dart: "When I trust, b'y, I trust. You pays for un when you can." It was a compact, so, at the end of the season, Solomon builded a cottage under the Man-o'-War, Broad Cove way, and married a maid of the place. In five months of that winter he made the trap, every net of it, leader and all, with his own hands, that he might know that the work was good, to the last knot and splice. In the spring, he put up the stage and the flake, and made the skiff; which done, he waited for a sign of fish. When the tempered

days came, he hung the net on the horse, where it could be seen from the threshold of the cottage. In the evenings he sat with Priscilla on the bench at the door, and dreamed great dreams, while the red sun went down in the sea, and the shadows crept out of the wilderness.

"Woman, dear," said this young Solomon Stride, with a slap of his great thigh, "'twill be a gran' season for fish this year."

"Sure, b'y," said Priscilla, tenderly; "'twill be a gran' season for fish."

"Ay," Solomon sighed, "'twill that—this year."

The gloaming shadows gathered over the harbour water, and hung, sullenly, between the great rocks, rising all roundabout.

"'Tis handy t' three hundred an' fifty dollars I owes Luke Dart for the twine," mused Solomon.

"'Tis a hape o' money t' owe," said Priscilla.

"Hut!" growled Solomon, deep in his chest. "'Tis like nothin'."

"'Tis not much," said Priscilla, smiling, "when you has a trap."

Dusk and a clammy mist chased the glory from the hills; the rocks turned black, and a wind, black and cold, swept out of the wilderness and ran to sea.

"Us'll pay un all up this year," said Solomon. "Oh," he added loftily, "'twill be easy. 'Tis t' be a gran' season!"

"Sure!" said she, echoing his confidence.

Night filled the cloudy heavens overhead. It drove the flush of pink in upon the sun, and, following fast and overwhelmingly, thrust the flaring red and gold over the rim of the sea; and it was dark.

"Us'll pay un for a trap, dear," chuckled Solomon, "an have enough left over t' buy a—"

"Oh," she cried, with an ecstatic gasp, "a sewin' machane!"

"Iss," he roared. "Sure, girl!"

But, in the beginning of that season, when the first fish ran in for the caplin, and the nets were set out, the ice was still hanging off shore, drifting vagrantly with the wind; and there came a gale in the night, springing from the northeast—a great, vicious wind, which gathered the ice in a pack and drove it swiftly in upon the land. Solomon Stride put off in a punt, in a sea tossing and white, to loose the trap from its moorings. Three times, while the pack swept nearer, crunching and horribly groaning, as though lashed to cruel speed by the gale, the wind beat him back through the tickle; and, upon the fourth essay, when his strength was breaking, the ice ran over the place where the trap was, and chased the punt into the harbour, frothing upon its flank. When, three days thereafter, a west wind carried the ice to sea, Solomon dragged the trap from the bottom. Great holes were bruised in the nets, head

rope and span line were ground to pulp, the anchors were lost. Thirty-seven days and nights it took to make the nets whole again, and in that time the great spring run of cod passed by. So, in the next spring, Solomon was deeper in the debt of sympathetic Luke Dart—for the new twine and for the winter's food he had eaten; but, of an evening, when he sat on the bench with Priscilla, he looked through the gloaming shadows gathered over the harbour water and hanging between the great rocks, to the golden summer approaching, and dreamed gloriously of the fish he would catch in his trap.

"Priscilla, dear," said Solomon Stride, slapping his iron thigh, "they be a fine sign o' fish down the coast. 'Twill be a gran' season, I'm thinkin'."

"Sure, b'y," Priscilla agreed; " 'twill be a gran' cotch o' fish you'll have this year."

Dusk and the mist touched the hills, and, in the dreamful silence, their glory faded; the rocks turned black, and the wind from the wilderness ruffled the water beyond the flake.

"Us'll pay Luke Dart this year, I tells you," said Solomon, like a boastful boy. "Us'll pay un twice over."

"'Twill be fine t' have the machane," said she, with shining eyes.

"An' the calico t'use un on," said he.

And so, while the night spread overhead, these two simple folk feasted upon all the

sweets of life; and all that they desired they possessed, as fast as fancy could form wishes, just as though the bench were a bit of magic furniture, to bring dreams true—until the night, advancing, thrust the red and gold of the sunset clouds over the rim of the sea, and it was dark.

"Leave us goa in," said Priscilla.

"This year," said Solomon, rising, "I be goain' t' cotch three hundred quintals o' fish. Sure, I be—this year."

"'Twill be fine," said she.

It chanced in that year that the fish failed utterly; hence, in the winter following, Ragged Harbour fell upon days of distress; and three old women and one old man starved to death—and five children, of whom one was the infant son of Solomon Stride. Neither in that season, nor in any one of the thirteen years coming after, did this man catch three hundred quintals of cod in his trap. In pure might of body—in plenitude and quality of strength—in the full, eager power of brawn—he was great as the men of any time, a towering glory to the whole race, here hidden; but he could not catch three hundred quintals of cod. In spirit—in patience, hope, courage, and the fine will for toil—he was great; but, good season or bad, he could not catch three hundred quintals of cod. He met night, cold, fog, wind, and the fury of waves, in their craft, in their swift assault, in their slow, crushing descent; but all the cod he

could wrest from the sea, being given into the hands of Luke Dart, an honest man, yielded only sufficient provision of food and clothing for himself and Priscilla—only enough to keep their bodies warm and still the crying of their stomachs. Thus, while the nets of the trap rotted, and Solomon came near to middle age, the debt swung from seven hundred dollars to seven, and back to seventy-three, which it was on an evening in spring, when he sat with Priscilla on the sunken bench at the door, and dreamed great dreams, as he watched the shadows gather over the harbour water and sullenly hang between the great rocks, rising all roundabout.

"I wonder, b'y," said Priscilla, "if 'twill be a good season—this year."

"Oh, sure!" exclaimed Solomon. "Sure!"

"D'ye think it, b'y?" wistfully.

"Woman," said he, impressively, "Us'll cotch a hape o' fish in the trap this year. They be millions o' fish t' the say," he went on excitedly; "millions o' fish t' the say. They be there, woman. 'Tis oan'y for us t' take un out. I be goain' t' wark hard this year."

"You be a great warker, Solomon," said she: "my, but you be!"

Priscilla smiled, and Solomon smiled; and it was as though all the labour and peril of the season were past, and the stage were full to the roof with salt cod. In the happiness of this dream they smiled again, and turned

their eyes to the hills, from which the glory of purple and yellow was departing to make way for the misty dusk.

"Skipper Luke Dart says t' me," said Solomon, "that 'tis the luxuries that keeps folks poor."

Priscilla said nothing at all.

"They be nine dollars agin me in seven years for crame o' tartar," said Solomon. "Think o' that!"

"My," said she, "but 'tis a lot! But we be used to un now, Solomon, an' we can't get along without un."

"Sure," said he, "'tis good we're not poor like some folk."

Night drove the flush of pink in upon the sun and followed the red and gold of the horizon over the rim of the sea.

"'Tis growin' cold," said she.

"Leave us goa in," said he.

In thirty years after that time, Solomon Stride put to sea ten thousand times. Ten thousand times he passed through the tickle rocks to the free, heaving deep for salmon and cod, thereto compelled by the inland waste, which contributes nothing to the sustenance of the men of that coast. Hunger, lurking in the shadows of days to come, inexorably drove him into the chances of the conflict. Perforce he matched himself ten thousand times against the restless might of the sea, immeasurable and unrestrained, surviving the gamut of its moods because he

was great in strength, fearlessness, and cunning. He weathered four hundred gales, from the grey gusts which come down between Quid Nunc and the Man-o'-War, leaping upon the fleet, to the summer tempests, swift and black, and the first blizzards of winter. He was wrecked off the Mull, off the Three Poor Sisters, on the Pancake Rock, and again off the Mull. Seven times he was swept out to sea by the offshore wind. Eighteen times he was frozen to the seat of his punt; and of these, eight times his feet were frozen, and thrice his festered right hand. All this he suffered, and more, of which I may set down six separate periods of starvation, in which thirty-eight men, women, and children died,—all this, with all the toil, cold, despair, loneliness, hunger, peril, and disappointment therein contained. And so he came down to old age—with a bent back, shrunken arms, and filmy eyes—old Solomon Stride, now prey for the young sea. But, of an evening in spring, he sat with Priscilla on the sunken bench at the door, and talked hopefully of the fish he would catch from his punt.

"Priscilla, dear," said he, rubbing his hand over his weazened thigh, "I be thinkin' us punt fishermen'll have a—"

Priscilla was not attending: she was looking into the shadows above the harbour water, dreaming deeply of a mystery of the Book, which had long puzzled her; so, in

silence, Solomon, too, watched the shadows rise and sullenly hang between the great rocks.

"Solomon, b'y," she whispered, "I wonder what the seven thunders uttered."

"'Tis quare, that—what the seven thunders uttered," said Solomon. "My, woman, but 'tis!"

" 'An' he set his right foot upon the sea,' " she repeated, staring over the greying water to the clouds which flamed gloriously at the edge of the world, " 'an' his left foot on the earth—' "

" 'An' cried with a loud voice,' " said he, whispering in awe, " 'as when a lion roareth: an' when he had cried, *seven thunders uttered their voices.*' "

" 'Seven thunders uttered their voices,' " said she: " 'an' when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write, an' I heard a voice from heaven sayin' unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.' "*

The wind from the wilderness, cold and black, covered the hills with mist; the dusk fell, and the glory faded from the heights.

"Oh, Solomon," she said, clasping her hands, "I wonder what the seven thunders uttered! Think you, b'y, 'twas the kind o' sins that can't be forgiven?"

"'Tis the seven mysteries!"

*The Revelation of St. John the Divine, chap. x., 2-4.

"I wonder what they be," said she.

"Sh-h-h, dear," he said, patting her grey head; "thinkin' on they things'll capsize you an' you don't look out."

The night had driven all the colour from the sky; it had descended upon the red and gold of the cloudy west, and covered them. It was cold and dark.

"'An' seven thunders uttered their voices,'" she said, dreamily.

"Sh-h-h, dear!" said he. "Leave us goa in."

Twenty-one years longer old Solomon Stride fished out of Ragged Harbour. He put to sea five thousand times more, weathered two hundred more gales, survived five more famines—all in the toil for salmon and cod. He was a punt fisherman again, was old Solomon; for the nets of the trap had rotted, had been renewed six times, strand by strand, and had rotted at last beyond repair. What with the weather he dared not pit his failing strength against, the return of fish to Luke Dart fell off from year to year; but, as Solomon said to Luke, "livin' expenses kep' up wonderful," notwithstanding.

"I be so used t' luxuries," he went on, running his hand through his long grey hair, "that 'twould be hard t' come down t' common livin'. Sure, 'tis sugar I wants t' me tea—not black-strap. 'Tis what I l'arned," he added, proudly, "when I were a trap fisherman."

"'Tis all right, Solomon," said Luke. "Many's the quintal o' fish you traded with me."

"Sure," Solomon chuckled; 'twould take a year t' count un."

In course of time it came to the end of Solomon's last season—those days of it when, as the folk of the coast say, the sea is hungry for lives—and the man was eighty-one years old, and the debt to Luke Dart had crept up to $230.80. The off-shore wind, rising suddenly, with a blizzard in its train, caught him alone on the Grappling Hook grounds. He was old, very old—old and feeble and dull; the cold numbed him; the snow blinded him; the wind made sport of the strength of his arms. He was carried out to sea, rowing doggedly, thinking all the time that he was drawing nearer the harbour tickle; for it did not occur to him then that the last of eight hundred gales could be too great for him. He was carried out from the sea, where the strength of his youth had been spent, to the Deep, which had been a mystery to him all his days. That night he passed on a pan of ice, where he burned his boat, splinter by splinter, to keep warm. At dawn he lay down to die. The snow ceased, the wind changed; the ice was carried to Ragged Harbour. Eleazar Manuel spied the body of Solomon from the lookout, and put out and brought him in—revived him and took him home to Priscilla. Through the winter the

old man doddered about the harbour, dying of consumption. When the tempered days came —the days of balmy sunshine and cold evening winds—he came quickly to the pass of glittering visions, which, for such as die of the lung trouble, come at the end of life.

In the spring, when the *Lucky Star,* three days out from Boot Bay, put into Ragged Harbour to trade for the first catch, old Skipper Luke Dart was aboard, making his last voyage to the shore; for he was very old, and longed once more to see the rocks of all that coast before he made ready to die. When he came ashore, Eleazar Manuel told him that Solomon Stride lay dying at home; so the skipper went to the cottage under the Man-o'-War to say good-bye to his old customer and friend—and there found him, propped up in bed, staring at the sea.

"Skipper Luke," Solomon quavered, in deep excitement, "be you just come in, b'y?"

"Iss—but an hour gone."

"What be the big craft hangin' off shore? Eh—what be she, b'y?"

There had been no craft in sight when the *Lucky Star* beat in. "Were she a fore-an'-after, Solomon?" said Luke, evasively.

"Sure, noa, b'y!" cried Solomon. "She were a square-rigged craft, with all sail set—a great, gran' craft—a quare craft, b'y—like she were made o' glass, canvas an' hull an' all; an' she had shining ropes, an' she were shinin' all over. Sure, they be a star t'

the tip o' her bowsprit, b'y, an' a star t' the peak o' her mainmast—seven stars they be, in all. Oh, she were a gran' sight!"

"Hem-m!" said Luke, stroking his beard. "She've not come in yet."

"A gran' craft!" said Solomon.

"'Tis accordin'," said Luke, "t' whether you be sot on oak bottoms or glass ones."

"She were bound down north t' the Labrador," Solomon went on quickly, "an' when she made the Grapplin' Hook grounds she came about an' headed for the tickle, with her sails squared. Sure she ran right over the Pancake, b'y, like he weren't there at all, an'—How's the wind, b'y?"

"Dead off shore from the tickle."

Solomon stared at Luke. "She were comin' straight in agin the wind," he said, hoarsely. "Maybe, skipper," he went on, with a little laugh, "she do be the ship for souls. They be many things strong men knows nothin' about. What think you?"

"Ay—maybe; maybe she be."

"Maybe—maybe—she do be invisible t' mortal eyes. Maybe, skipper, you hasn't seed her; maybe 'tis that my eyes do be opened t' such sights. Maybe she've turned in—for me."

The men turned their faces to the window again, and gazed long and intently at the sea, which a storm cloud had turned black. Solomon dozed for a moment, and when he

awoke, Luke Dart was still staring dreamily out to sea.

"Skipper Luke," said Solomon, with a smile as of one in an enviable situation, "'tis fine t' have nothin' agin you on the books when you comes t' die."

"Sure, b'y," said Luke, hesitating not at all, though he knew to a cent what was on the books against Solomon's name, "'tis fine t' be free o' debt."

"Ah," said Solomon, the smile broadening gloriously, "'tis fine, I tells you! 'Twas the three hundred quintal I cotched last season that paid un all up. 'Twas a gran' cotch—last year. Ah," he sighed, "'twas a gran' cotch o' fish."

"Iss—you be free o' debt now, b'y."

"What be the balance t' my credit, skipper? Sure I forget."

"Hem-m," the skipper coughed, pausing to form a guess which might be within Solomon's dream; then he ventured: "Fifty dollars?"

"Iss," said Solomon, "fifty an' moare, skipper. Sure, you has forgot the eighty cents."

"Fifty-eighty," said the skipper, positively. "'Tis that. I call un t' mind now. 'Tis fifty-eighty—iss, sure. Did you get a receipt for un, Solomon?"

"I doan't mind me now."

"Um-m-m—well," said the skipper, "I'll

send un t' the woman the night—an order on the *Lucky Star.*"

"Fifty-eighty for the woman!" said Solomon. "'Twill kape her off the Gov'ment for three years, an she be savin'. 'Tis fine —that!"

When the skipper had gone, Priscilla crept in, and sat at the head of the bed, holding Solomon's hand; and they were silent for a long time, while the evening approached.

"I be goain' t' die the night, dear," said Solomon at last.

"Iss, b'y," she answered; "you be goain' t' die."

Solomon was feverish now; and, thereafter, when he talked, his utterance was thick and fast.

"'Tis not hard," said Solomon. "Sh-h-h," he whispered, as though about to impart a secret. "The ship that's hangin' off shoare, waitin' for me soul, do be a fine craft—with shinin' canvas an' ropes. Sh-h! She do be 'tother side o' Mad Mull now—waitin'."

Priscilla trembled, for Solomon had come to the time of visions—when the words of the dying are the words of prophets, and contain revelations. What of the utterings of the seven thunders?

"Sure the Lord he've blessed us, Priscilla," said Solomon, rational again. "Goodness an' mercy has followed us all the days o' our lives. Our cup runneth over."

"Praise the Lard," said Priscilla.

"Sure," Solomon went on, smiling like a little child, "we've had but eleven famines, an' we've had the means o' grace pretty reg'lar, which is what they hasn't t' Round 'Arbour. We've had one little baby for a little while. Iss—one de-ear little baby, Priscilla; an' there's them that's had none o' their own, at all. Sure we've had enough t' eat when they wasn't a famine—an' bakin' powder, an' raisins, an' all they things, an' sugar, an' rale good tea. An' you had a merino dress, an' I had a suit o' rale tweed—come straight from England. We hasn't seed a railroad train, dear, but we've seed a steamer, an' we've heard tell o' the quare things they be t' St. John's. Ah, the Lard he've favoured us above our deserts. He've been good t' us, Priscilla. But, oh, you hasn't had the sewin' machane, an' you hasn't had the peach-stone t' plant in the garden. 'Tis my fault, dear—'tis not the Lard's. I should 'a' got you the peach-stone from St. John's, you did want un so much, oh, so much! 'Tis that I be sorry for, now, dear; but 'tis all over, an' I can't help it. It wouldn't 'a' growed anyway, I know it wouldn't; but you thought it would, an' I wisht I'd got un for you."

"'Tis nothin', Solomon," she sobbed. "Sure, I was joakin' all the time. 'Twouldn't 'a' growed."

"Ah," he cried, radiant, "was you joakin'?"

"Sure," she said.

"We've not been poor, Priscilla," said he, continuing, "an' they be many folk that's poor. I be past me labour now," he went on, talking with rising effort, for it was at the sinking of the sun, "an' 'tis time for me t' die. 'Tis time—for I be past me labour."

Priscilla held his hand a long time after that—a long, silent time, in which the soul of the man struggled to release itself, until it was held but by a thread.

"Solomon!"

The old man seemed not to hear.

"Solomon, b'y!" she cried.

"Iss?" faintly.

She leaned over him to whisper in his ear, "Does you see the gates o' heaven?" she said. "Oh, does you?"

"Sure, dear; heaven do be——"

Solomon had not strength enough to complete the sentence.

"B'y! B'y!"

He opened his eyes and turned them to her face. There was the gleam of a tender smile in them.

"The seven thunders," she said. "The utterin's of the seven thunders—what was they, b'y?"

"'An' the seven thunders uttered their voices,'" he mumbled, "'an'——'"

She waited, rigid, listening, to hear the rest; but no words came to her ears.

"Does you hear me, b'y?" she said.

"'An' seven—thunders—uttered their voices,'" he gasped, "'an' the seven thunders—said—said——'"

The light failed; all the light and golden glory went out of the sky, for the first cloud of a tempest had curtained the sun.

"'An' said—'" she prompted.

"'An' uttered—an' said—an' said—'"

"Oh, what?" she moaned.

* * *

Now, in that night, when the body of old Solomon Stride, a worn-out hulk, aged and wrecked in the toil of the deep, fell into the hands of Death, the sea, like a lusty youth, raged furiously in those parts. The ribs of many schooners, slimy and rotten, and the white bones of men in the off-shore depths, know of its strength in that hour—of its black, hard wrath, in gust and wave and breaker. Eternal in might and malignance is the sea! It groweth not old with the men who toil from its coasts. Generation upon the heels of generation, infinitely arising, go forth in hope against it, continuing for a space, and returning spent to the dust. They age and crumble and vanish, each in its turn, and the wretchedness of the first is the wretchedness of the last. Ay, the sea has measured the strength of the dust in old

graves, and, in this day, contends with the sons of dust, whose sons will follow to the fight for an hundred generations, and thereafter, until harvests may be gathered from rocks. As it is written, the life of a man is a shadow, swiftly passing, and the days of his strength are less; but the sea shall endure in the might of youth to the wreck of the world.

ANNE TO THE RESCUE

ALL things great are wound up with all things little. At first glance it might not seem that the decision of a certain Canadian Premier to include Prince Edward Island in a political tour could have much or anything to do with the fortunes of little Anne Shirley at Green Gables. But it had.

It was in January the Premier came, to address his loyal supporters and such of his non-supporters as chose to be present at the monster mass meeting held in Charlottetown. Most of the Avonlea people were on the Premier's side of politics; hence, on the night of the meeting nearly all the men and a goodly proportion of the women had gone to town, thirty miles away. Mrs. Rachel Lynde had gone too. Mrs. Rachel Lynde was a red-hot politician and couldn't have believed that the political rally could be carried through without her, although she was on the opposite side of politics. So she went to town and took her husband—Thomas would be useful in looking after the horse—and Marilla Cuthbert with her. Marilla had a sneaking interest in politics herself, and as she thought it might be her only chance to see a real live Premier, she promptly took it, leaving Anne

and Matthew to keep house until her return the following day.

Hence, while Marilla and Mrs. Rachel were enjoying themselves hugely at the mass meeting, Anne and Matthew had the cheerful kitchen at Green Gables all to themselves. A bright fire was glowing in the old-fashioned Waterloo stove and blue-white frost crystals were shining on the window-panes. Matthew nodded over a *Farmer's Advocate* on the sofa and Anne at the table studied her lessons with grim determination, despite sundry wistful glances at the clock shelf, where lay a new book that Jane Andrews had lent her that day. Jane had assured her that it was warranted to produce any number of thrills, or words to that effect, and Anne's fingers tingled to reach out for it. But that would mean Gilbert Blythe's triumph on the morrow. Anne turned her back on the clock shelf and tried to imagine it wasn't there.

"Matthew, did you ever study geometry when you went to school?"

"Well now, no, I didn't," said Matthew, coming out of his doze with a start.

"I wish you had," sighed Anne, "because then you'd be able to sympathize with me. You can't sympathize properly if you've never studied it. It is casting a cloud over my whole life. I'm such a dunce at it, Matthew."

"Well now, I dunno," said Matthew soothingly. "I guess you're all right at anything.

Mr. Phillips told me last week in Blair's store at Carmody that you was the smartest scholar in school and was making rapid progress. 'Rapid progress' was his very words. There's them as runs down Teddy Phillips and says he ain't much of a teacher; but I guess he's all right."

Matthew would have thought anyone who praised Anne was "all right."

"I'm sure I'd get on better with geometry if only he wouldn't change the letters," complained Anne. "I learn the proposition off by heart, and then he draws it on the blackboard and puts different letters from what are in the book and I get all mixed up. I don't think a teacher should take such a mean advantage, do you? We're studying agriculture now and I've found at last what makes the roads red. It's a great comfort. I wonder how Marilla and Mrs. Lynde are enjoying themselves. Mrs. Lynde says Canada is going to the dogs the way things are being run at Ottawa, and that it's an awful warning to the electors. She says if women were allowed to vote we would soon see a blessed change. What way do you vote, Matthew?"

"Conservative," said Matthew promptly. To vote Conservative was part of Matthew's religion.

"Then I'm Conservative too," said Anne decidedly. "I'm glad, because Gil—because some of the boys in school are Grits. I guess

Mr. Phillips is a Grit too, because Prissy Andrews' father is one, and Ruby Gillis says that when a man is courting he always has to agree with the girl's mother in religion and her father in politics. Is that true, Matthew?"

"Well now, I dunno," said Matthew.

"Did you ever go courting, Matthew?"

"Well now, no, I dunno's I ever did," said Matthew, who had certainly never thought of such a thing in his whole existence.

Anne reflected with her chin in her hands.

"It must be rather interesting, don't you think, Matthew? Ruby Gillis says when she grows up she's going to have ever so many beaus on the string and have them all crazy about her; but I think that would be too exciting. I'd rather have just one in his right mind. But Ruby Gillis knows a great deal about such matters because she has so many big sisters, and Mrs. Lynde says the Gillis girls have gone off like hot cakes. Mr. Phillips goes up to see Prissy Andrews nearly every evening. He says it is to help her with her lessons, but Miranda Sloane is studying for Queen's, too, and I should think she needed help a lot more than Prissy because she's ever so much stupider, but he never goes to help her in the evenings at all. There are a great many things in this world that I can't understand very well, Matthew."

"Well, now, I dunno as I comprehend them all myself," acknowledged Matthew.

"Well, I suppose I must finish up my lessons. I won't allow myself to open that new book Jane lent me until I'm through. But it's a terrible temptation, Matthew. Even when I turn my back on it I can see it there just as plain. Jane said she cried herself sick over it. I love a book that makes me cry. But I think I'll carry that book into the sitting-room and lock it in the jam closet and give you the key. And you must *not* give it to me, Matthew, until my lessons are done, not even if I implore you on my bended knees. It's all very well to say resist temptation, but it's ever so much easier to resist it if you can't get the key. And then shall I run down the cellar and get some russets, Matthew? Wouldn't you like some russets?"

"Well, now, I dunno but what I would," said Matthew, who never ate russets but knew Anne's weakness for them.

Just as Anne emerged triumphantly from the cellar with her plateful of russets came the sound of flying footsteps on the icy board walk outside and the next moment the kitchen door was flung open and in rushed Diana Barry, white-faced and breathless, with a shawl wrapped hastily around her head. Anne promptly let go of her candle and plate in her surprise, and plate, candle, and apples crashed together down the cellar ladder and were found at the bottom, embedded in melted grease, the next day, by Marilla, who

gathered them up and thanked mercy the house hadn't been set on fire.

"Whatever is the matter, Diana?" cried Anne. "Has your mother relented at last?"

"Oh, Anne, do come quick," implored Diana nervously. "Minnie May is awful sick—she's got croup, Young Mary Joe says—and father and mother are away to town and there's nobody to go for the doctor. Minnie May is awful bad and Young Mary Joe doesn't know what to do—and oh, Anne, I'm so scared!"

Matthew, without a word, reached out for cap and coat, slipped past Diana and away into the darkness of the yard.

"He's gone to harness the sorrel mare to go to Carmody for the doctor," said Anne, who was hurrying on hood and jacket. "I know it as well as if he'd said so. Matthew and I are such kindred spirits I can read his thoughts without words at all."

"I don't believe he'll find the doctor at Carmody," sobbed Diana. "I know that Doctor Blair went to town and I guess Doctor Spencer would go too, Young Mary Joe never saw anybody with croup and Mrs. Lynde is away. Oh, Anne!"

"Don't cry, Di," said Anne cheerily. "I know exactly what to do for croup. You forget that Mrs. Hammond had twins three times. When you look after three pairs of twins you naturally get a lot of experience. They all had croup regularly. Just wait till

I get the ipecac bottle—you mayn't have any at your house. Come on now."

The two little girls hastened out hand in hand and hurried through Lovers' Lane and across the crusted field beyond, for the snow was too deep to go by the shorter wood way. Anne, although sincerely sorry for Minnie May, was far from being insensible to the romance of the situation and to the sweetness of once more sharing that romance with a kindred spirit.

The night was clear and frosty, all ebony of shadow and silver of snowy slope; big stars were shining over the silent fields; here and there the dark pointed firs stood up with snow powdering their branches and the wind whistling through them. Anne thought it was truly delightful to go skimming through all this mystery and loveliness with your bosom friend who had been so long estranged.

Minnie May, aged three, was really very sick. She lay on the kitchen sofa, feverish and restless, while her hoarse breathing could be heard all over the house. Young Mary Joe, a buxom, broad-faced French girl from the Creek, whom Mrs. Barry had engaged to stay with the children during her absence, was helpless and bewildered, quite incapable of thinking what to do, or doing it if she thought of it.

Anne went to work with skill and promptness.

"Minnie May has croup all right; she's

pretty bad, but I've seen them worse. First we must have lots of hot water. I declare, Diana, there isn't more than a cupful in the kettle! There, I've filled it up, and, Mary Joe, you may put some wood in the stove. I don't want to hurt your feelings, but it seems to me you might have thought of this before if you'd any imagination. Now, I'll undress Minnie May and put her to bed, and you try to find some soft flannel cloths, Diana. I'm going to give her a dose of ipecac first of all."

Minnie May did not take kindly to the ipecac, but Anne had not brought up three pairs of twins for nothing. Down that ipecac went, not only once, but many times during the long, anxious night when the two little girls worked patiently over the suffering Minnie May, and Young Mary Joe, honestly anxious to do all she could, kept on a roaring fire and heated more water than would have been needed for a hospital of croupy babies.

It was three o'clock when Matthew came with the doctor, for he had been obliged to go all the way to Spencervale for one. But the pressing need for assistance was past. Minnie May was much better and was sleeping soundly.

"I was awfully near giving up in despair," explained Anne. "She got worse and worse until she was sicker than ever the Hammond twins were, even the last pair. I actually thought she was going to choke to death. I gave her every drop of ipecac in that bottle,

and when the last dose went down I said to myself—not to Diana or Young Mary Joe, because I didn't want to worry them any more than they were worried, but I had to say it to myself just to relieve my feelings—'This is the last lingering hope and I fear 'tis a vain one.' But in about three minutes she coughed up the phlegm and began to get better right away. You must just imagine my relief, doctor, because I can't express it in words. You know there are some things that cannot be expressed in words."

"Yes, I know," nodded the doctor. He looked at Anne as if he were thinking some things about her that couldn't be expressed in words. Later on, however, he expressed them to Mr. and Mrs. Barry.

"That little red-headed girl they have over at Cuthbert's is as smart as they make 'em. I tell you she saved that baby's life, for it would have been too late by the time I got here. She seems to have a skill and presence of mind perfectly wonderful in a child of her age. I never saw anything like the eyes of her when she was explaining the case out to me."

Anne had gone home in the wonderful, white-frosted winter morning, heavy-eyed from loss of sleep, but still talking unweariedly to Matthew as they crossed the long white field and walked under the glittering fairy arch of the Lovers' Lane maples.

"Oh, Matthew, isn't it a wonderful morn-

ing? The world looks like something God had just imagined for His own pleasure, doesn't it? Those trees look as if I could blow them away with a breath—pouf. I'm so glad I live in a world where there are white frosts, aren't you? And I'm so glad Mrs. Hammond had three pairs of twins after all. If she hadn't I mightn't have known what to do for Minnie May. I'm real sorry I was ever cross with Mrs. Hammond for having twins. But, oh Matthew, I'm so sleepy. I can't go to school. I just know I couldn't keep my eyes open and I'd be so stupid. But I hate to stay home for Gil—some of the others will get head of the class, and it's so hard to get up again—although of course the harder it is the more satisfaction you have when you do get up, haven't you?''

''Well, now, I guess you'll manage all right,'' said Matthew, looking at Anne's white little face and the dark shadows under her eyes. ''You just go right to bed and have a good sleep. I'll do all the chores.''

Anne accordingly went to bed and slept so long and soundly that it was well on in the white and rosy winter afternoon when she awoke and descended to the kitchen where Marilla, who had arrived home in the meantime, was sitting knitting.

''Oh, did you see the Premier?'' exclaimed Anne at once. ''What did he look like, Marilla?''

"Well, he never got to be Premier on account of his looks," said Marilla. "Such a nose as that man had! But he can speak. I was proud of being a Conservative. Rachel Lynde, of course, being a Liberal, had no use for him. Your dinner is in the oven, Anne; and you can get yourself some blue-plum preserve out of the pantry. I guess you're hungry. Matthew has been telling me about last night. I must say it was fortunate you knew what to do. I wouldn't have had any idea myself, for I never saw a case of croup. There now, never mind talking till you've had your dinner. I can tell by the look of you that you're just full up with speeches, but they'll keep."

Marilla had something to tell Anne, but she did not tell it just then, for she knew if she did Anne's consequent excitement would lift her clear out of the region of such material matters as appetite or dinner. Not until Anne had finished her saucer of blue plums did Marilla say:

"Mrs. Barry was here this afternoon, Anne. She wanted to see you, but I wouldn't wake you up. She says you saved Minnie May's life, and she is very sorry she acted as she did in that affair of the currant wine. She says she knows now you didn't mean to set Diana drunk, and she hopes you'll forgive her and be good friends with Diana again. You're to go over this evening if you like, for Diana can't stir outside the

door on account of a bad cold she caught last night. Now, Anne Shirley, for pity's sake don't fly clean up into the air."

The warning seemed not unnecessary, so uplifted and aerial was Anne's expression and attitude as she sprang to her feet, her face irradiated with the flame of her spirit.

"Oh, Marilla, can I go right now—without washing my dishes? I'll wash them when I come back, but I cannot tie myself down to anything so unromantic as dish-washing at this thrilling moment."

"Yes, yes, run along," said Marilla indulgently. "Anne Shirley—are you crazy? Come back this instant and put something on you. I might as well call to the wind. She's gone without a cap or wrap. Look at her tearing through the orchard with her hair streaming. It'll be a mercy if she doesn't catch her death of cold."

Anne came dancing home in the purple winter twilight across the snowy places. Afar in the south-west was the great shimmering, pearl-like sparkle of an evening star in a sky that was pale golden and ethereal rose over gleaming white spaces and dark glens of spruce. The tinkles of sleigh-bells among the snowy hills came like elfin chimes through the frosty air, but their music was not sweeter than the song in Anne's heart and on her lips.

"You see before you a perfectly happy person, Marilla," she announced. "I'm

perfectly happy—yes, in spite of my red hair. Just at present I have a soul above red hair. Mrs. Barry kissed me and cried and said she was so sorry and she could never repay me. I felt fearfully embarrassed, Marilla, but I just said as politely as I could, 'I have no hard feelings for you, Mrs. Barry. I assure you once for all that I did not mean to intoxicate Diana and henceforth I shall cover the past with the mantle of oblivion.' That was a pretty dignified way of speaking, wasn't it, Marilla? I felt that I was heaping coals of fire on Mrs. Barry's head. And Diana and I had a lovely afternoon. Diana showed me a new fancy crochet stitch her aunt over at Carmody taught her. Not a soul in Avonlea knows it but us, and we pledged a solemn vow never to reveal it to anyone else. Diana gave me a beautiful card with a wreath of roses on it and a verse of poetry:

> If you love me as I love you
> Nothing but death can part us two.

And that is true, Marilla. We're going to ask Mr. Phillips to let us sit together in school again, and Gertie Pye can go with Minnie Andrews. We had an elegant tea. Mrs. Barry had the very best china set out, Marilla, just as if I was real company. I can't tell you what a thrill it gave me. Nobody ever used their very best china on my account before. And we had fruit-cake and pound-cake and

dough-nuts and two kinds of preserves, Marilla. And Mrs. Barry asked me if I took tea and said, 'Pa, why don't you pass the biscuits to Anne?' It must be lovely to be grown up, Marilla, when just being treated as if you were is so nice."

"I don't know about that," said Marilla with a brief sigh.

"Well, anyway, when I am grown up," said Anne decidedly, "I'm always going to talk to little girls as if they were, too, and I'll never laugh when they use big words. I know from sorrowful experience how that hurts one's feelings. After tea Diana and I made taffy. The taffy wasn't very good, I suppose because neither Diana nor I had ever made any before. Diana left me to stir it while she buttered the plates and I forgot and let it burn; and then when we set it out on the platform to cool the cat walked over one plate and that had to be thrown away. But the making of it was splendid fun. Then when I came home Mrs. Barry asked me to come over as often as I could and Diana stood at the window and threw kisses to me all the way down to Lovers' Lane. I assure you, Marilla, that I feel like praying to-night and I'm going to think out a special brand-new prayer in honour of the occasion."

THE DEATH OF THE COLT

A MUFFLED tread sounded in the hall, and a low knock on the door. Renny opened it on Rags, sleep-rumpled but important.

"Sorry to disturb you, sir, but Wright is downstairs. 'E's just come in from the stible and 'e says Cora's colt 'as took a turn for the worse, sir, and would you please 'ave a look at it."

Rags spoke with the bright eagerness of hired help who have bad news to tell.

This was bad indeed, for Cora was a new and expensive purchase.

"Oh, curse the luck," growled Renny, as he and Wright, with coat collars turned up, hurried through the rain, now only a chill drizzle, toward the stable.

"Yes indeed, sir," said Wright. "It's pretty hard luck. I was just going to put the light out and go to bed,"—he and two other men slept above the garage,—"when I saw she was took bad. She'd just been nursed too, and we'd give her a raw egg, but she sort of collapsed and waved her head about, and I thought I'd better fetch you. She'd seemed a bit stronger to-day, too."

Down in the stable it was warm and dry. The electric light burned clearly,——lamps in

the house, electricity in the stables at Jalna,—and there was a pleasant smell of new hay. The foal lay on a bed of clean straw in a loose box. Its dam, in the adjoining stall, threw yearning and troubled glances at it over the partition. Why was not its tender nose pressing and snuffling against her? Why, when it suckled, did it pull so feebly, with none of those delicious buntings and furious pullings which, instinct told her, were normal and seemly?

Renny pulled off his coat, threw it across the partition, and knelt beside the foal. It seemed to know him, for its great liquid eyes sought his face with a pleading question in them. Why was it thus? Why had it been dropped from warm indolent darkness into this soul-piercing light? What was it? And along what dark echoing alley would it soon have to make its timid way alone?

Its head, large and carved, was raised above its soft furry body; its stiff foal's legs looked all pitiful angles.

"Poor little baby," murmured Renny, passing his hands over it, "poor little sick baby."

Wright and Dobson stood by, reiterating the things they had done for it. Cora plaintively whinnied and gnawed the edge of her manger.

"Give me the liniment the vet left," said Renny. "Its legs are cold."

He filled his palm with the liquid and began to rub the foal's legs. If only warmth and strength could pass from him into it! "By Judas," he thought, "perhaps there's some fiery virtue in my red head!"

He sent the two men to their beds, for he wanted to look after the foal himself, and they must have their sleep.

He rubbed it till his arms refused to move, murmuring encouragements to it, foolish baby talk: "Little colty—poor little young 'un—does she feel 'ittle bit better then?" and "Cora's baby girl!"

Comforting noises came from other stalls, soft blowings through wide velvety nostrils, deep contented sighs, now and again a happy munching as a wisp of left-over supper was consumed, the deep sucking-in of a drink. He took a turn through the passages between the stalls, sleepy whinnies of recognition welcoming him. In the hay-scented dusk he caught the shine of great liquid eyes, a white blaze on a forehead, a white star on a breast, or the flash of a suddenly tossed mane. God, how he loved them, these swift and ardent creatures! "Shall I ever see the foal standing tall and proud in her box like one of these?"

He went back to her.

Cora had lain down, a dark hump in the shadow of her stall. In her anxiety she had kicked her bedding into the passage, and lay on the bare floor.

The foal's eyes were half closed, but when

Renny put his hand on its tawny flank, they flew wide open, and a shiver slid beneath his palm. He felt its legs. Warmer. He was going to save it. He was going to save it! It wanted to rise. He put his arms about it. "There—up she comes now!" It was on its feet, its eyes blazing with courage, its neck ridiculously arched, its legs stiffly braced. Clattering her hoofs, Cora rose, whinnying, and looked over the partition at her offspring. It answered her with a little grunt, took two wavering steps, then, as if borne down by the weight of its heavy head, collapsed again on the straw. "Hungry. Hungry. Poor old baby's hungry. She's coming, Cora. Hold on, pet." He carried the colt to its dam and supported it beneath her.

Oh, her ecstasy! She quivered from head to foot. She nuzzled it, slobbering, almost knocking it over. She nuzzled Renny, wetting his hair. She bit him gently on the shoulder. "Steady on. Steady on, old thing. Ah, the baby's got it. Now for a meal!"

Eagerly it began to suck, but had scarcely well begun when its heart failed it. The foal turned its head petulantly away. Cora looked at Renny in piteous questioning. It hung heavy in his arms. He carried it back, and began the rubbing again. It dozed. He dozed, his face glistening with sweat under the electric light.

But another light was penetrating the stable. Daylight, pale and stealthy as a cat,

creeping through the straw, gliding along the cobweb-hung beams, penetrating delicately into the blackest corners. Impatient whinnies were flung from stall to stall. Low, luscious moos answered from the byre. The orchestra of cocks delivered its brazen salute to the dawn. The stallion's blue-black eyes burned in fiery morning rage, but the little foal's eyes were dim.

Renny bent over it, felt its legs, looked into its eyes. "Oh, that long, long, lonely gallop ahead of me," its eyes said. "To what strange pasture am I going?"

Wright came clattering down the stairs, his broad face anxious.

"How's the wee foal, sir?"

"It's dying, Wright."

"Ah, I was afraid we couldn't save her. Lord, Mr. Whiteoak, you shouldn't have stopped up all night! When I saw the light burning I was sure you had, and I came straight over."

Cora uttered a loud terrified whinny.

The two men bent over the foal.

"It's gone, Wright."

"Yes, sir. Cora knows."

"Go in and quiet her. Have it taken away. God! It came suddenly at the last."

The rain was over. A mild breeze had blown a clear space in the sky. It was of palest blue, and the blown-back clouds, pearl and amethyst, were piled up, one on another, like tumbled towers. Behind the wet boles of

the pines a red spark of sunrise burned like a torch.

Renny pictured the soul of the foal, strong-legged, set free, galloping with glad squeals toward some celestial meadow, its eyes like stars, its tail a flaming meteor, its flying hoofs striking bright sparks from rocky planets. "What a blithering ass I am—worse than Eden. Writing poetry next.... All her foals —and theirs—generations of them—lost."